

# **SCOPING REVIEW: MUNICIPAL ANTI-RACIST PRACTICES THAT MIGHT WORK**

*Produced with support from the City of Calgary through its partnership with  
the Urban Alliance of the University of Calgary and the Faculty of Social Work*

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Anti-racist work is needed now more than ever. The public killing of Mr. George Floyd has been a worldwide wake up call for racial justice. The testimonies arising out of the City of Calgary's 2020 anti-racism consultations showed that racism impacts day-to-day interactions and has devastating consequences for the overall well-being of society and individual citizens. For example, racism has long been understood to be a key social determinant of health — like housing, education, income, employment, food security, and justice — which drives health inequities across the country.

The City of Calgary conducted public consultations during the summer of 2020. Members of Indigenous and racialized groups across the city were invited to speak about their experiences of racism and to offer suggestions and recommendations that would contribute to anti-racist work in Calgary and beyond. The recorded stories were poignant and emotional. The participants used lived experiences to confirm that systemic racism is a current and real issue for Calgarians. Many of the accounts related to city policies and services in the police, housing, transportation, and land development departments.

This report builds on these initial consultations to add examples of anti-racist practices that have worked in other municipalities from an environmental scan of empirical and grey literature. The work of this report was supported by the City of Calgary through its partnership with the Urban Alliance of the University of Calgary.

The key goal of the scoping literature review is to present a summary description of key anti-racist practices that could inform initiatives at the City of Calgary as it moves to engage in anti-racist work through various programs and services.

This report is not exhaustive. Given the time constraints of the literature review and complexity of the research across disciplines, this scoping review only provides the highlights of key areas in which the City of Calgary can strategically initiate anti-racist work. Each proposed practice is accompanied by case examples where available.

As the readers of this report will notice, many of the anti-racist practice examples come from the United States. This does not mean that municipalities in other countries, including Canada, haven't attempted to address racial inequities and injustices. Instead, the researchers found that the few initiatives the municipalities introduced lacked formalized bylaws and policies to sustain implementation, or the suggested practices and programs overlapped with or fell under the jurisdictions of other levels of government. In the case of municipal-urban Indigenous relations in Canada, municipalities faced resistance and prejudice from non-Indigenous citizens. The

acknowledgement of urban Indigenous people as citizens like any other, or as members of a political community that retains its self-governance even off-reserve, remains a significant challenge. The fear of overlapping authority and program duplication is one concern. A second is the reliance on Mayors and Councils to guide policy development with minimum engagement of Indigenous people in order to gain their support for socio-economic goals. These concerns limit the functionality of any partnership and innovations in anti-racist work.

What is clear from this literature review is that racism will not disappear simply through hope or good intentions. Ensuring anti-racist practices take root in the governance of municipalities requires not only the acknowledgement of racism but a fundamental shift in business-as-usual. This means:

1. Institutionalizing anti-racism and mainstreaming anti-racist policies and practices by:
  - a. Creating a dedicated, citywide anti-racism office that oversees all internal and external anti-racist programs and initiatives; and
  - b. Incorporating citywide racial equity impact assessments and collecting disaggregated data systematically to ensure monitoring and evaluation of the results for different equity-seeking groups.
2. Adopting an anti-racist participatory governance approach to ensure that the City integrates the voices of Indigenous and racialized communities. Examples of these practices include:
  - a. Participatory budgeting that goes beyond representation and actively challenges racial power dynamics;
  - b. Participatory planning that envisions equity in all social determinants of health; and
  - c. Reconciliatory and reparative actions.
3. Building equitable and vibrant communities by employing a racial equity lens in all city practices and services, including through:
  - a. Zoning;
  - b. Culturally appropriate housing;
  - c. Property taxes.

The scoping review indicates that for anti-racist practices to take root in the life of Calgarians, the municipality will have to negotiate, collaborate, and develop sustainable partnerships with other levels of government, engage all its citizens through different community groups, and facilitate their interactions by investing both monetary and non-monetary resources to achieve its anti-racist goals.

Where there is a will, there is a way!

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# INTRODUCTION

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, was killed by a white police officer of Minneapolis, Minnesota. The officer knelt on his neck while his colleagues prevented onlookers from intervening. The world watched the full eight minutes and forty-six seconds as the victim pleaded that he could not breathe. Mr. Floyd was not the first nor the last Black person to die at the hands of the police. However, the world reacted to the video of his killing in unusual ways. Here in Calgary, there was shock and outrage at this act of police violence against a Black man. George Floyd's killing sparked conversation about institutionalized racist violence in the City of Calgary. His experience resonated with Indigenous and racialized people who distrust local authorities and have experienced racism and violence from the police. In response, the City of Calgary expressed a desire to actively pursue an anti-racist agenda. This scoping review is one of the responses to the aspiration for social justice and racial inclusion within a vibrant city.

The City of Calgary conducted public consultations during the summer of 2020. Members of Indigenous and racialized groups across the city were invited to speak about their experiences of racism and offer suggestions and recommendations that would contribute to anti-racist work in Calgary and beyond. The recorded stories were poignant and emotional. The participants used lived experiences to confirm that systemic racism is a current and real issue for Calgarians. Many of the accounts related to city policies and services in the police, housing, transportation, and land development departments.

This report builds on these initial consultations to add examples of anti-racist practices that have worked in other municipalities from an environmental scan of empirical and grey literature. The development of this report was supported by the City of Calgary through its partnership with the Urban Alliance of the University of Calgary.

The key goal of the scoping literature review is to present a summary description of anti-racist practices that could inform initiatives at the City of Calgary as it moves forward to engage in anti-racist work through various programs and services.

This report is not exhaustive. Given the time constraints of the literature review and complexity of the research across disciplines, this scoping review only provides the highlights of key areas in which the City of Calgary can strategically initiate anti-racist work. Each area of practice is accompanied by case examples where available.

# SCOPING REVIEW METHODOLOGY

This review began with an environmental scan of relevant databases and grey literature using a combination of keywords, including racism, anti-racist practices, municipality, city, community partnership, community collaboration, as well as keywords related to the social determinants of health, such as housing, employment, poverty, health, and education. The researchers added keywords related to municipal programs, such as transportation, city taxes, urban planning and development, and community space. The researchers wanted to make sure the proposed practices were reflective of programs that were initiated by either the city or the community but engaged both partners and came from an anti-racist perspective. The focus was on literature from Western countries, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada with the idea that they share some sociopolitical histories in the areas of immigration (voluntary or involuntary) and governance models.

This scoping was an evolving process that required regular review to ensure the report focused on real anti-racist practices that can be implemented in our city and not just wishful thinking about what could be done. The initial search led to the following key observations, which helped determine what was included in this report.

First, the environmental scan in this scoping review showed a preference in diverse but majority white societies for terms such as multiculturalism, diversity, social inclusion, and social justice. However, though Western nations with increased numbers of racialized immigrants, such as Canada, take pride in multiculturalism, they continue to use concepts of culture and diversity in policies to purely symbolic effect. Simply put, these practices fail to challenge racism in a meaningful way. Furthermore, these countries avoid the hard but necessary work of understanding growing unrest and widening disintegration in favour of reductive explanations around culture and civilization “that attempt to avoid the charge of racism.”<sup>6</sup> In this review, practices rooted in multiculturalism and diversity but lacking an anti-racist perspective were excluded.

Second, many of the publications use the anti-racist keywords described above for study recommendations, wish list reports, and the strategic plans of municipalities and community organizations but have not implemented or evaluated this work. As the readers of this report will notice, many of the anti-racist practice examples provided come from the United States. This does not mean that municipalities in other countries, including Canada, have not attempted to address racial inequities and injustices. Instead, the researchers found that the few initiatives the municipalities introduced lacked formalized bylaws and policies to sustain implementation, or the suggested practices and programs overlapped with or fell under the jurisdictions of other levels of

government, leaving gaps and mismatches between them<sup>1</sup>. In the case of municipal-urban Indigenous relations in Canada, municipalities faced resistance and prejudice from non-Indigenous citizens. The acknowledgement of urban Indigenous people as citizens like any other, or as members of a political community that retains its self-governance even off-reserve, remains a significant challenge. The fear of overlapping authority and program duplication is one concern. A second is the reliance on Mayors and Councils to guide policy development with minimum engagement of Indigenous people in order to gain their support for socio-economic goals<sup>2</sup>. These concerns limit the functionality of any partnership and innovations in anti-racist work.

To overcome these limitations, the researchers adapted the criteria developed by Joshua Newman<sup>3</sup> to identify the anti-racist practices included in this report. These criteria were:

1. The process undertaken by a given municipality or community organization (for profit or non-profit) to introduce anti-racist initiatives;
2. The goal attainment of the proposed initiatives;
3. The distributional outcomes, focusing on identifying the group that benefited from a specific initiative or policy; and
4. The political consequences, or how the stakeholders involved perceived the benefit of the practice or initiative.

Anti-racist practices that did not meet at least the first three criteria represent practices to avoid, not good practice examples.

At the advice of the city representatives, literature pertaining to police work was excluded from the reviewed literature. The Calgary Police Service is devising its own anti-racist strategy. The researchers of this scoping review hope the suggested practices will be shared with the Calgary Police Department to avoid duplications and the fragmentation of programs.

Third, anti-Indigenous racism has existed in settler countries since the initial encounters with Europeans. While racialized settlers also experience racism, their socio-political history is different, so are their rights and patterns of relationship with the settler community<sup>4</sup>. In the case of Canada for example, Indigenous people have a nation-to-nation relationship with the federal government, with an understanding that Indigenous

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<sup>1</sup> Walker, C. R. (2008). Improving the interface between urban municipalities and Aboriginal communities. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 17 (1), Supplement: Canadian Planning and Policy / Aménagement et Politique au Canada, 20-36.

<sup>2</sup> Belanger, Y.D. & Walker, R.C. (2009). "Interest convergence & co-production of plans: An examination of Winnipeg's' Aboriginal pathways. *Canadian Journal of Urban Studies*, 18(1): 118-139.

<sup>3</sup> Newman, J. (2014). Measuring policy success: Case studies from Canada and Australia. *Australia Journal of Public Administration*, vol. 73, no. 2, pp. 192–205.

<sup>4</sup> Young, R. (2011). "Conclusion." In E. J. Peters (Ed.), *Urban Aboriginal Policy Making in Canadian Municipalities* (pp.203-228). McGill-Queen's University Press.



people are to retain self-determination and self-governance on the reserves. While the policies bounding Indigenous people on the reserves are racist in nature, they also complicate the recognition of urban Indigenous as citizens who can retain their political and cultural rights outside the reserves. This situation makes the relationship between municipalities and Indigenous communities difficult and the development of specifically urban municipal-Indigenous relations complex.<sup>5</sup> While the general anti-racist practices of this report could be applicable to anti-Indigenous racism, the researchers looked for practices that have been implemented to address the specific forms of racism this group faces in urban settings, though they present many gaps.

Fourth, the limits of what the municipalities can or cannot do based on the jurisdictional boundaries of each level of government emerged in the literature, specifically in terms of anti-racist practices pertaining to the social determinants of health, such as education, housing, and employment. The literature argues that municipalities have the capacity to exercise their power to promote equitable policies and practices, including those concerning urban Indigenous communities<sup>6</sup> or Indigenous reserves adjacent to the municipal boundaries, such as Calgary and Tsuut'ina Nation.<sup>7</sup> Municipalities can do so through negotiation and activism within their spheres of influence for the benefit of all citizens.<sup>8 9 10</sup> The examples of responses to the COVID-19 pandemic indicate that local governments are capable of doing this work. At the beginning of the pandemic, the Government of Alberta put into place several measures to prevent evictions and improve housing affordability. This included a moratorium on all evictions related to non-payment of rent and/or utilities between March 27 and May 1, 2020. These measures demonstrated the potential for the provincial government to make changes to promote housing stability and to address the needs of individuals who are struggling with rental payments. This could in effect, albeit temporarily, reduce racial inequities linked to income inequality. According to a report by the Canadian Medical Association, 85 percent of our risk of illness is linked to social determinants such as income, housing, education, systemic racism and access to health care. For racialized groups that are already discriminated against in housing,<sup>11</sup> COVID-19 put them in a very vulnerable situation.

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<sup>5</sup> Belanger, Y.D. & Walker, R.C. (2009).

Heritz, J. (2018). Municipal-Indigenous relations in Saskatchewan: Getting started in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert. *Canadian Public Administration*, 61 (4), 616–640.

Dekruyk, K. A. (2017). "Citizens minus?": Urban aboriginal self-determination and co-production in the city of Calgary. Thesis, University of Lethbridge.

<sup>6</sup> Belanger & Walker, *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> (Dekruyk, 2017)

<sup>8</sup> Mayer, M. (2018). Cities as sites of refuge and resistance. *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 25(3) 232–249.<sup>9</sup>

Nash, C. (2003). Cultural geography: Anti-racist geographies. *Progress in Human Geography* 27 (5), 637–648.

<sup>10</sup> Nicholls, W. & Uitermark, J. (2016). Migrant cities: Place, power, and voice in the era of super diversity. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2015.1126088>

<sup>11</sup> Hansson et al. (2010). "Improving mental health services for immigrant, refugee, ethno-cultural and racialized groups: Issues and options for service improvement." Accessed September 2020.

[http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/system/files/private/Diversity\\_Issues\\_Options\\_Report\\_ENG\\_0.pdf](http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/system/files/private/Diversity_Issues_Options_Report_ENG_0.pdf) Francis, J. (2019).

"Human rights violations as humanist performance: Dehumanizing criminalized refugee youth in Canada." *The Canadian Geographer* 63(1): 129-144. <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007/s40596-020-01208->

Although decisions around rent control and the Residential Tenancies Act are not under the purview of the City of Calgary, the changes enacted in the first months of the pandemic show how cooperation with higher levels of government can have sizable impacts on people, especially racialized people, living in Calgary.

Fifth, as indicated above, the environmental scan of the existing literature revealed confusion around the definitions of racism, anti-racist practices, and equity and highlighted the dangers of discourse focused on multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusion, which results in practices that divert attention away from racism itself and how to dismantle it. This confusion is not always due to semantic difficulties. Discussions around racism and “anti-racism” are often frowned upon and result in defensiveness, tensions, needing explanations of all the time, and backlash because of their systemic and political nature.

The hesitancy to make racist practices visible limits dialogue and research on this topic. The anti-racist literature argues that when racism is not explicitly acknowledged for what it is, its significance is downplayed and existing injustices are blamed on the individual or their culture while the myth of meritocracy is upheld.<sup>12</sup> **The myth of meritocracy** is rooted in capitalist and egalitarian values, constituting “a social system in which advancement in society is based on an individual’s capabilities and merits rather than on the basis of family, wealth, or social background.”<sup>13</sup> From an urban liberal policy perspective, the myth of meritocracy claims that by removing social barriers such as poverty and income inequalities and giving people equal opportunities, they could experience upward mobility. Imbroscio<sup>14</sup> argues that the paradigm of meritocracy is flawed because while it imagines that offering equal opportunities to individual citizens will allow them to rise to the occasion to achieve upward social mobility, it ignores “the political and moral tolerance of high levels of inequality... incapable of achieving more than marginal benefits and its pursuit results in many normative costs.”<sup>15</sup> According to Imbroscio, cities would do better by challenging elitism, the rule of expertise, concentrated power, and hierarchy, and making serious efforts to uplift entire urban communities. He suggests that this can only be done by weaving together equity and anti-racist practices that not only remove barriers but also empower racialized citizens to participate in the life of the city and take ownership in building capacity and social and economic capital.

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<sup>12</sup> Nelson, J. K. & Dunn, K. (2017). Neoliberal anti-racism: Responding to ‘everywhere but different’ racism. *Progress in Human Geography*, 41(1) 26–43.

<sup>13</sup> Kim, C. H., Choi, Y. B. (2017), How meritocracy is defined today?: Contemporary aspects of meritocracy, *Economics and Sociology*, 10(1), 112-121. DOI: 10.14254/2071-789X.2017/10-1/8

<sup>14</sup> Imbroscio, D. (2016), Urban policy as meritocracy: A critique, *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 38(1), 79-104.

<sup>15</sup> Imbroscio (2016) p. 93

This uplifting of community challenges the principles of neoliberalism. A detailed discussion of neoliberalism goes beyond the scope of this literature review, but, in a nutshell, according to Ganti<sup>16</sup>:

**the concept of neoliberalism** has four main referents: (a) a set of economic reform policies that some political scientists characterize as the “D-L-P formula,” which are concerned with the *deregulation of the economy, the liberalization of trade and industry, and the privatization of state-owned enterprises* (Steger & Roy 2010, p. 14); (b) a prescriptive development model that defines *very different political roles for labor, capital, and the state compared with prior models, with tremendous economic, social, and political implications* (Boas & Gans-Morse 2009, p. 144); (c) an ideology that values market exchange as “an ethic in itself, capable of acting as a guide to all human action and substituting for all previously held ethical beliefs” (Treanor 2005); and (d) a mode of governance that *embraces the idea of the self-regulating free market, with its associated values of competition and self-interest, as the model for effective and efficient government* (Steger & Roy 2010, p. 12).

Based on these referents, and from the context of this scoping review, neoliberal policies have promoted multiculturalism and diversity at the expense of anti-racist policies and practices that emphasize the celebration of culture, raising awareness about the diversity of culture through festivals and training (e.g., cultural competency training), with the very purpose to commodify “otherness.”<sup>17</sup> Nelson<sup>18</sup> argues that, through multiculturalism and diversity, neoliberalism reframes anti-racism as “harmony,” “understanding,” and “respect,” which serves to deny racism. This reframing, also known as a colour-blind approach, assumes that race is not a contemporary issue in need of twenty-first century intervention. Rendering racism an issue of the past that does not matter anymore<sup>19</sup> has significant implications for anti-racist policies and practices.

Sixth, the key goal of the literature review is to present a summary description of anti-racist best practices that could inform initiatives at the City of Calgary as it moves to engage in anti-racist work through various programs and services. To avoid any further confusion about racism and related concepts, the researchers deemed it important to provide some definitions. The research team would like to encourage the readers to keep in mind the warning offered by Black scholar Ibrahim X. Kendi: “the opposite of ‘racist’ isn’t ‘not racist.’ It is ‘anti-racist.’”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ganti, T. (2014). Neoliberalism. *The Annual Review of Anthropology*, 43:89–104.

<sup>17</sup> Babacan, H. & Hollinsworth, D. (2009). *Confronting racism in communities project: A final report on the nature and extent of racism in Queensland*. Paddington, Queensland: Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care.

<http://multiculturalcare.org.au/assets/uploads/confronting-racism-in-communities-final-report.pdf#:~:text=CONFRONTING%20RACISM%20IN%20COMMUNITIES%20PROJECT%3A%20A%20final%20report,through%20the%20Department%20of%20Communities%E2%80%99%20Multicultural%20Affairs%20Queensland.>

<sup>18</sup> Nelson, J. K. (2013). Denial of racism and its implications for local action. *Discourse & Society*, 24, 89–109.

<sup>19</sup> Modica, M. (2015). Unpacking the ‘colourblind approach’: accusations of racism at a friendly, mixed-race school. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 18 (3), 396–418, DOI: 10.1080/13613324.2014.985585

<sup>20</sup> Kendi, I. X. (2019). *How to Be an Antiracist*. First Edition. One World, 26. p. 9

# DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Several concepts, such as anti-racism and institutional racism, will reoccur throughout this report so it is important that the definitions are clear. Though the definitions below are based on the American experience,<sup>2115</sup> they are just as applicable within the Canadian context.

**Systemic racism:** According to Elias and Feagin, systemic racism is

“the centuries-old foundation of American society” and the “racialized character structure, and development of this society,” specifically the “unjustly gained political-economic power of whites” and “continuing economic and other resource inequalities along racial lines.”<sup>22</sup>

Accordingly,

“the central component of systemic racism is ‘white racial frame,’ an organized set of racialized ideas, stereotypes, emotions, and inclinations to discriminate” that are part of the “colour-coded framing of society” which includes a “positive orientation to whites and whiteness and a negative orientation to racial ‘others’ who are exploited and oppressed.”<sup>23</sup>

This foundation of systemic racism that developed from the genocide of Indigenous peoples in the United States and the enslavement of Africans forced out of their continent through the transatlantic slave trade has expanded to other colonial countries, including Canada, that has its own share in these oppressive systems and their ongoing legacies to this day through voluntary and involuntary immigration (for refugees).

**White supremacy:** White supremacy is “the presumed superiority of white racial identities, however problematically defined, in support of the cultural, political, and economic domination of non-white groups.”<sup>24</sup>

According to these authors, a “focus on white supremacy thus highlights both the social condition of whiteness, including the unearned assets afforded to white people, as well the processes, structures, and historical foundations upon which these privileges rest.”<sup>25</sup> It is within these unearned privileges that the myth of meritocracy developed.

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<sup>21</sup> Lawrence, K. & Keleher, T. (2004). Chronic disparity: Strong and pervasive evidence of racial inequalities. Poverty outcomes structural racism. Retrieved from: <http://www.intergroupresources.com/rc/Definitions%20of%20Racism.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Elias, S. & Feagin, J. R. (2020). Systemic racism and the white racial framing. In J. Solomon, *Routledge International Handbook of contemporary racisms*, p. 2

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*

<sup>24</sup> Bonds, A. & Inwood, J. (2016). Beyond white privilege: Geographies of white supremacy and settler colonialism. *Progress in Human Geography*, 40(6), 715–733.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid*

**Structural racism:** Structural racism makes normal and legitimate an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional, and interpersonal — that routinely advantage white people while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for racialized people. Structural Racism lies *underneath, all around, and across society*. It encompasses:

- **History**, which lies *underneath* the surface, providing the foundation for white supremacy in this country,
- **Culture**, which exists *all around* our everyday lives, providing the normalization and replication of racism and,
- **Interconnected institutions and policies**, whose key relationships and rules *across society* provide the legitimacy and reinforcement necessary to maintain and perpetuate racism.

The scope of structural racism encompasses the entire system of white supremacy, diffused and infused in all aspects of society, including our history, culture, politics, economics, and our entire social fabric. In other words, structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism — all other forms of racism (institutional, interpersonal, internalized, etc.) emerge from structural racism.

The key indicators of structural racism are inequalities in power, access, opportunities, treatment, and policy impacts and outcomes, whether they are intentional or not. Structural racism is more difficult to locate in a particular institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually producing new, and reproducing old, forms of racism.

**Individual racism:** Individual racism lies *within individuals*. These are private manifestations of racism that reside inside the individual. Examples include prejudice, xenophobia, internalized oppression and privilege, and beliefs about race influenced by the dominant culture.

**Institutional racism:** Institutional racism occurs *within and between institutions*. Institutional racism is discriminatory treatment, unfair policies, and inequitable opportunities and impacts based on race, produced and perpetuated by institutions (schools, mass media, etc.). Individuals within institutions take on the power of the institution when they act in ways that advantage and disadvantage people based on race.

In addition, Dr. Kwame McKenzie, CEO of the Wellesley Institute, offers seven characteristics of institutional racism<sup>26</sup>:

1. Institutional racism occurs at many levels inside and outside an organization.
2. It is intersectional — the impacts of institutional racism are linked to other forms of marginalization and discrimination.

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<sup>26</sup> McKenzie, K. (2016). Rethinking definitions of institutional racism. The Wellesley Institute. Advancing Urban Health.

3. Institutional racism is fluid, it changes over time and changes to ensure that the disparities continue.
4. It is linked to the ideology of an organization. An example is that the rise of evidence-based medicine was based on the ideology of providing superior health care for middle-class white people. It did not look for evidence about interventions that would work equally well for racialized populations and promote health equity.
5. The problem is organizational. Institutional racism lies in the processes and policies of an organization. It is in the swim lanes that are developed to marshal behavior in an organization. It is in the differential action of the laws, processes, and practices of organizations.
6. Because institutional racism lies in the fabric of organizations, institutional racism can occur in organizations that do not intend to discriminate.
7. Institutional racism lies not only within organizations but in the links between organizations. Organizations should understand that they are responsible to try to decrease disparities even when they are associated with the actions of another organization.

**Anti-racism:** Anti-racism refers to those forms of thoughts and/or practice that seek to confront, eradicate and/or ameliorate racism. Anti-racism implies the ability to identify a phenomenon—racism—and do something about it.<sup>27</sup>

**Anti-racist research:** Anti-racist research places racialized people at the centre of analysis by focusing on their lived experiences and the “simultaneity of [their] oppression.”<sup>28</sup> This approach allows researchers to move past the common language of diversity and tolerance to tackle issues of differential treatment and power. Anti-racist research, according to Brewer,<sup>29</sup> motivates social and political action by moving discussions beyond tolerance and diversity to deal with the troubling evidence of “... hatred, exclusion and violence.”

It is important to note that mentioning race as a variable in empirical research does not make research findings and study recommendations anti-racist. For this reason, this scoping review explored both empirical and grey literature that clearly addresses racism and engages in racial justice.

**Intersectionality:** Anti-racist analysis takes into consideration intersecting identity factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, socioeconomic

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<sup>27</sup> Bonnett, A. (2000). Routledge, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> Crenshaw, W.K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex. A Black feminist critique of anti-discrimination doctrine. Feminist theory and anti-racist politics. The University of Chicago, Legal Forum.

<sup>29</sup> Dei, G.J.S. & Johal, S. (2011). Critical issues in anti-racist research methodologies. An introduction. In G. J. S. Dei & S. Johal, Critical issues in anti-racist research methodologies (pp. 1-27). Peter Lang Publishing. P.3

status, religion, and ability and pays attention to the way these characteristics intersect. Intersectionality is a lens through which to critically analyze how different inequities interact to “uncover the structural forces attached to categorization that drives unequal relationships.”<sup>30</sup> Intersectionality was first used in the examination of the experiences of Black women and their distinctive histories in the political arena and in relation to institutions, power relationships, culture, and interpersonal interaction in early 1990s.<sup>31</sup> Intersectionality continues to be used to understand the complex interactive nature of different forms of oppressions and privileges.<sup>32</sup> Sociologists Hae Yeon Cho and Myra Marx identify three areas of practice in which intersectionality is expressed.<sup>33</sup>

1. A focus on *inclusion* of the experiences of multiple and intersecting identities of persons and/or groups.
2. A focus on intersectionality as defined in practice as an *analytic interaction* — examining both oppressions and privileges beyond the enumeration and addition of race, class, gender, and other types of social subordination as separate factors.
3. *Institutional primacy* as the site for producing social inequalities, whether as main effects or as interactions.

**Equity versus Inequality:** Inequality is simply the condition of being unequal. While the existence of inequality often highlights an inequitable situation, that which is unequal is not necessarily inequitable (and that which is equal is not necessarily equitable). Inequalities can be categorized into three broad types: (i) unavoidable; (ii) avoidable but freely chosen or accepted; and (iii) avoidable and imposed or not accepted (i.e. unfair).

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<sup>30</sup> Nguyen, T-H. & `Nguyen B.M.D. (2018). Is the “first-generation student” term useful for understanding inequality? The role of intersectionality in illuminating the implications of an accepted—yet unchallenged—term. *Review of Research in Education*, 42, pp. 146–176.

<sup>31</sup> Collins, H. P. (1998). It is all in the family: Intersections of gender, race, and nation. *Hypatia*, 13(3), 62- 82.

<sup>32</sup> Collins, H. P. (2019). *Intersectionality. As critical social theory*. Duke University Press.

<sup>33</sup> Choo, H. Y. & Ferrer, M. M. (2010). Practicing intersectionality in sociological research: A critical analysis of inclusions, interactions, and institutions in the study of inequalities. *Sociological Theory* 28:2, 129-149.

# PART 1: INSTITUTIONALIZING ANTI-RACIST PRACTICES

In 2006, the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (CCMARD) conducted a review of the City of Calgary, one of the coalition's first signatories. Top on the list of recommendations was the suggestion that the city pilot a coordinated approach to diversity management. The report found that, across many organizations in North America, "in order to create an integrated and consistent approach to these issues, a dedicated office with appropriate resources is created that has a corporate-wide mandate."<sup>34</sup> When the report was written, various equity-related committees had been created and subsequently disbanded over the years for various reasons.<sup>35</sup>

Fast forward to October 2020, the City of Calgary created the Anti-Racism Action Committee as part of its commitment to address anti-racism work and is currently in the process of recruiting an anti-racism team made up of city staff to implement a community-based anti-racism strategy.<sup>36</sup> While the City currently has individual staff who support various equity-related initiatives, these latest commitments represent a more concerted effort to address racism. The challenge will now be to ensure that these efforts are effective, sustainable, and part of the DNA of the city's operations.

Below are case studies that illustrate the institutionalization of anti-racist practices through the establishment of dedicated offices to oversee anti-racist practices across municipalities, mainstreaming racial equity impact assessments and systematically using disaggregated data to make equity-informed decisions.

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## **PRACTICE #1: CREATE A DEDICATED, CITYWIDE ANTI-RACISM OFFICE**

While 2020 has been described by many as a "racial reckoning," racism and its effects existed long before 2020 and will not be eradicated in a matter of years. Anti-racism practices will need to be integrated throughout the city and become part of its foundation. As of the writing of this report, the City of Calgary has hired an anti-racism team with plans to put together an anti-racism office, as the CCMARD recommended nearly 15 years ago. This will be an important and necessary step towards coordinating anti-racism efforts at all levels of the city's operations.

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<sup>34</sup> Stewart, c. (2007). *A report on the City of Calgary's Action Plan*. The Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (CCMARD). p. 14. Retrieved from:

[https://www.auma.ca/sites/default/files/sample\\_action\\_plans\\_-\\_calgary.pdf](https://www.auma.ca/sites/default/files/sample_action_plans_-_calgary.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> City of Calgary. (2020). *Calgary's commitment to anti-racism*. Retrieved from:

<https://www.calgary.ca/csp/cns/calgarys-commitment-to-anti-racism.html>



## CASE STUDY: Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI)

The City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) is "a citywide effort to end institutionalized racism and race-based disparities in city government" and was believed to be the first U.S. city effort to specifically address institutional racism when it was created in 2005.<sup>37</sup> The RSJI "is not a project — it is an ongoing commitment to a new way of doing business."<sup>38</sup> It is led by the Seattle Office of Civil Rights and an interdepartmental team of City staff. The RSJI teams and structure are embedded at several levels of city government and include myriad stakeholders, from the Core Team of 30 city staff who provide technical assistance to the Change Teams working to advance RSJI goals within each city department and the RSJI Community Roundtable, which include 23 organizations and agencies working to eliminate race-based disparities in communities across Seattle (see [Fig. 1](#)).<sup>39</sup> The RSJI also chooses to lead with race, and it does so as a means to achieve intersectional liberation for all oppressed groups. The RSJI justifies this approach as follows: "This prioritization is not based on the intent to create a ranking of oppressions (i.e., a belief that racism is "worse" than other forms of oppression). For an equitable society to come into being, we need to challenge the way racism is used as a divisive issue keeping communities from coming together to organize for change. While the RSJI leads with race, we recognize that all oppressions are perpetuated by the interplay of institutions, individuals, and culture operating amidst the weight of history."<sup>40</sup>

This approach is an example of targeted universalism, which is a results-based process that sets universal goals, assesses how policies may affect certain groups differently, and readjusts by focusing on targeted strategies to ensure that policies reach their intended population. Targeted universalism, described in one report as "Equity 2.0," advocates for the notion that the suffering of small groups negatively affects the progress and well-being of the collective.<sup>41</sup> Targeted universalism is essentially a rejection of one-size-fits all policy and acknowledges that there are factors, like racism, that prevent policies from benefiting all groups equally.

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<sup>37</sup> City of Seattle. (n.d.). *Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI)*. Retrieved from: <https://www.seattle.gov/rsji>

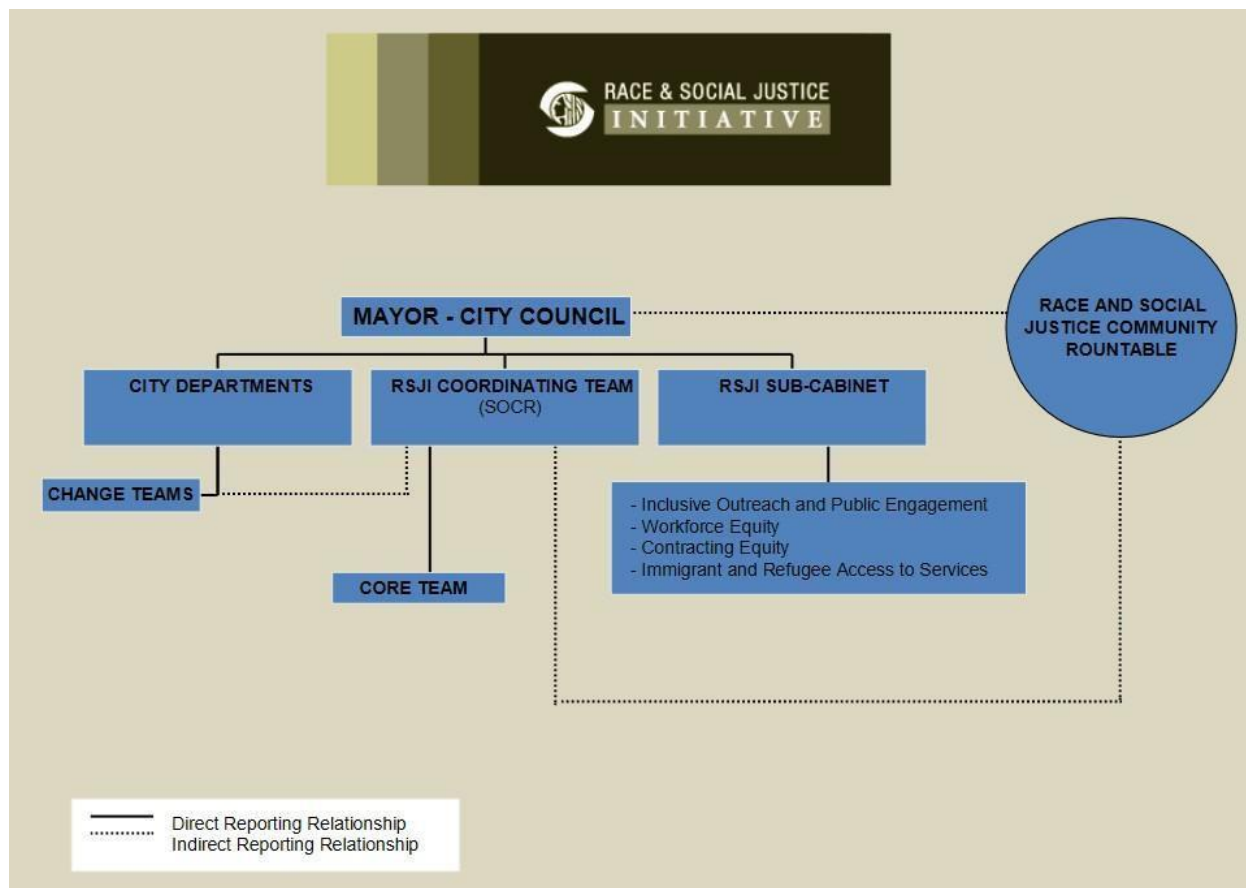
<sup>38</sup> Seattle Office for Civil Rights. (2008). *Race and Social Justice Initiation Report 2008: Looking Back, Moving Forward*, p. 3. Retrieved from: <https://www.seattle.gov/documents/Departments/RSJI/RSJI-2008-LOOKING-BACK-MOVING-FORWARD-Full%20Report-Final.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> City of Seattle. (n.d.). *RSJI Organization Chart*. Retrieved from: <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RSJI-Org-Chart.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> City of Seattle. (n.d.). *Why Lead with Race? Challenging Institutional Racism to Create an Equitable*

*Society for All*. Retrieved from: <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/why-lead-with-race.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Powell, J.A., Menendian, S & Ake, W. (2019). *Targeted Universalism: Policy & Practice*. Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, UC Berkeley.



**Fig. 1:** The RSJI Organization Chart illustrates how the RSJI is embedded at several levels of City government and includes local organizations working to end race-based disparities in Seattle. (Source: City of Seattle).

The RSJI's 2019–21 strategy breaks down into the following four pillars<sup>42</sup>:

1. Build an anti-racist network within city government. Shift internal practices and develop decision-making skills that eliminate institutional and structural racism.
  - a. This includes getting all City departments to draft a work plan in alignment with the RSJI's Equity areas, developing and supporting Change Teams within each department tasked with advancing racial equity and strengthening citywide use of the Racial Equity Toolkit (RET).
2. Transform the internal government culture of the city toward one rooted in racial justice, humanistic relationships, belonging and well-being.
  - a. This includes navigating racialized conflicts within city departments through restorative practices to address institutional power dynamics.

<sup>42</sup> City of Seattle. (2018). *RACE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE: 2019 – 2021 STRATEGY*. Retrieved from: [http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/18-21\\_RSJI\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_4.6.19\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/18-21_RSJI_Strategic_Plan_4.6.19_FINAL.pdf)

3. Align racial justice efforts with local community organizing and strengthen relationships with communities most impacted by structural racism.
  - a. This includes redirecting funding to communities most impacted by structural racism and using RETs to conduct racially equitable community engagement.
4. Work in relationship with national and regional racial justice leaders from all communities and sectors to advance racial justice.
  - a. This includes contributing and participating in racial justice initiatives with other regional governments and anti-racism organizations.

The RSJI's numerous tactics to reach the ultimate goal of eliminating institutional racism has begun to pay off: The city has doubled contracts with women and minority-owned businesses in non-construction goods and services; All city departments provide essential translation and interpretation services, which has strengthened immigrant and refugee communities' access to the municipality; and changes to community outreach resulted in hundreds of residents — who had never attended public meetings before — helping to write new development plans for their communities.<sup>43</sup>

### *Actionable Areas for Calgary*

1. Conduct a comprehensive environmental scan of municipal anti-racism offices to inform the structure and scope of Calgary's anti-racism team.
  - a. A centralized entity like the RSJI would allow the city to have a permanent, stand-alone headquarters for all things equity for years to come. Such an office would be responsible for citywide implementation of racial equity impact assessments (REIAs), conducting corporate-wide anti-racism training, developing racial equity competence within each business unit, and overseeing the overall systems-level changes that will allow the City of Calgary to operate as an anti-racist municipality. This office could also ensure the successful execution of already existing projects at the city, such as the Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, the Inclusion Index, the Calgary Equity Index, and several projects that currently fall under the banner of "diversity & inclusion," which can be re-evaluated through an anti-racist lens and executed in a coordinated way.
2. Localize anti-racism strategies at different levels of local government
  - a. Part of the RSJI's success is that its anti-racism strategy is decentralized and present across all departments. One way the city can improve on past anti-discrimination work is to avoid the pitfalls of siloed and one-off initiatives. The city should unite under a clear anti-racism strategy and encourage all business units to localize the strategy within their respective teams.

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<sup>43</sup> City of Seattle. (n.d.). *ADVANCE OPPORTUNITY.ACHIEVE EQUITY*. Retrieved from: <https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RSJI-Summary.pdf>

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## **PRACTICE #2: INCORPORATE RACIAL EQUITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS** **CITYWIDE**

Committing to anti-racism “requires persistent self-awareness, constant self-criticism, and regular self-evaluation.”<sup>44</sup> Equity impact assessments (EIAs), or more specifically racial equity impact assessments (REIAs), can be seen as the practical application of this argument. Broadly, EIAs are “an evidence-based approach designed to help organizations ensure that their policies, practices, events and decision-making processes are fair and do not present barriers to participation or disadvantage any protected groups from participation.”<sup>45</sup>

As a signatory to the CCMARD, now known as the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities, the City of Calgary made a commitment to “Monitor racism and discrimination in the community more broadly as well as municipal actions taken to address racism and discrimination.”<sup>46</sup> Establishing (R)EIAs at all levels of municipal governance would be a solid step in that direction. In the UK, for example, where EIAs have been used systematically at various levels of government since 2000, the assessments measure the impact of a project on all groups who hold “protected characteristics” as defined by the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation).<sup>47</sup> Other EIAs do not specify which groups to consider when conducting an assessment, but rather outline priority groups. In King County (which encompasses the city of Seattle), the equity impact review (EIR) worksheet (its EIA equivalent) asks that city officials completing the review “consider in particular low-income populations, communities of colour, and limited-English speaking residents.”<sup>48</sup> In Toronto, one EIA conducted on the city’s operating budget focused on gender and low-income people.<sup>49</sup>

REIAs, meanwhile, are understood as “a systematic examination of how different racial and ethnic groups will likely be affected by a proposed action or decision.” These assessments are “used to minimize unanticipated adverse consequences in a variety of contexts, including the analysis of proposed policies, institutional practices, programs,

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<sup>44</sup> Kendi, I. (2019). p. 23

<sup>45</sup> The Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council. (n.d.) *Equality Impact Assessment Guidance and Template*. Retrieved from: <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/documents/equality-impact-assessment-guidance-template-pdf/>

<sup>46</sup> Stewart, C. (2007). p. 5.

<sup>47</sup> Equality and Human Rights Commission. (n.d.) *Protected Characteristics*. Retrieved from: <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

<sup>48</sup> King County Equity and Social Justice. (2016). *2015 Equity Impact Review Process Overview*. Retrieved from: [https://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/2016/The\\_Equity\\_Impact\\_Review\\_checklist\\_Mar2016.ashx?la=en](https://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/2016/The_Equity_Impact_Review_checklist_Mar2016.ashx?la=en)

<sup>49</sup> City of Toronto. (2018). *2018 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE: Equity Impacts of Changes in the 2018 Operating Budget*. BN# 6–Dec 12. Retrieved from: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/951e-BN6-Op-Cluster-A-SDFA-Equity-Impacts.pdf>

plans and budgetary decisions.”<sup>50</sup> While REIAs specifically focus on race and ethnicity, it has long been argued that a focus on racial equity benefits all equity-seeking groups, since **“Systems that are failing communities of colour, are actually failing all of us”**<sup>51</sup> (emphasis in original). This is another example of targeted universalism, discussed above, in that some policies require race-based benchmarks because policies systematically marginalize certain populations based on race. In practice, this does not mean that the City of Calgary should enact policies solely with race in mind, but rather that it is a good starting point, along with other systematically marginalized groups, from which to gauge the success of municipal projects. For example, “focusing on what a trans, disabled, LGBTQ woman would need to navigate the business world will benefit multiple communities at once. This is using targeted strategies to reach universal goals and is the definition of *targeted universalism*” (emphasis in original).<sup>52</sup>

### CASE STUDY: King County’s Racial Equity Tool

King County, which includes Seattle and is home to about 2.25 million people, has a robust Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan that focuses on racial justice. To guide the strategy, an EIR tool “is embedded within the development and implementation processes of the proposed action,” by merging “empirical (quantitative) data and community engagement findings (qualitative) to inform planning, decision-making and implementation of actions which affect equity”<sup>53</sup> (see **Fig. 2**). King County uses a checklist to identify successful completion of an EIR, which is separated into the following five phases:

1. Defining the scope of a proposed action, which includes using demographic data to determine who will be affected;
2. Assessing the equity and community context, which requires assessing which determinants of equity may be affected by a proposed project;
3. Analyzing the plan and the decision process, which includes looking at alternatives to offset inequitable impacts;
4. Implementation, which requires that the county keep affected communities updated and involved in the implementation process, as well as advancing pro-equity measures such as hiring contractors from underrepresented groups; and
5. Ongoing learning, which requires that the county evaluate whether a project has met the community’s needs and seek to incorporate community feedback for future projects.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Race Forward: The Center for Racial Justice Innovation. (2009). *Racial Equity Impact Assessment*. Retrieved from: [https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/RacialJusticeImpactAssessment\\_v5.pdf](https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/RacialJusticeImpactAssessment_v5.pdf)

<sup>51</sup> Government Alliance on Race & Equity. (n.d.). *Why Working for Racial Equity Benefits Everyone*. Retrieved from: <https://www.racialequityalliance.org/about/our-approach/benefits/>

<sup>52</sup> Portland Means Progress. (n.d.). *Intersectionality*. Retrieved from: <https://portlandmeansprogress.com/intersectionality>

<sup>53</sup> King County Equity and Social Justice. (2016). *2015 Equity Impact Review Process Overview*. Retrieved from: [https://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/2016/The\\_Equity\\_Impact\\_Review\\_checklist\\_Mar2016.ashx?la=en](https://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/2016/The_Equity_Impact_Review_checklist_Mar2016.ashx?la=en)

<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*

## EQUITY IMPACT REVIEW PROCESS



**Fig. 2:** King County's Equity Impact Review process is broken down into five phases: defining the scope of a proposed action, assessing the equity and community context, analyzing the plan and the decision process, implementation, and ongoing learning. (Source: King County Equity and Social Justice)

King County has used the EIR toolkit to inform budget policies and decision-making across various departments.<sup>55</sup> For example, the Department of Transportation uses the EIR toolkit to make decisions about transit service reductions or enhancements.<sup>56</sup> The tool is also frequently used in budgeting decisions, including the decision to allocate money towards training staff on how to use equity review tools and maintaining youth recreation programs in a diverse and low-income area in the county. In cases where an EIR found that a proposed action would have negative impacts on equity, the county has used the EIR tool to develop mitigation plans.

<sup>55</sup> King County Equity and Social Justice. (2012). *Using the Equity Impact Review Toolkit*. Retrieved from: <https://kingcounty.gov/~media/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/documents/KingCountyEIRToolExamples.ashx?la=en>

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.*



### Actionable Areas for Calgary

1. Develop and systematically implement an EIA methodology for Calgary.
2. Systematically implement EIAs in all business units. However, the City of Calgary must beware of paralysis by analysis, as “Laws and definitions that make organizations focus on what they have done wrong or on working out why there are differences between groups, run the risk of promoting action on data collection and analysis rather than positive action-on-action to decrease disparities.”<sup>57</sup>
3. Use race-based data and other relevant disaggregated data to inform REIAs.
  - a. One point worth noting is that King County is partially able to determine how equity-seeking populations may be affected by the implementation of a project through spatialized disaggregated data,<sup>58 59</sup> a point that will be explored further below. For REIAs to be effective in Calgary, the city needs to collect race-based data down to the smallest census geographies possible.

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### **PRACTICE #3: SYSTEMATICALLY COLLECT DISAGGREGATED DATA**

To conduct a thorough racial equity impact assessment, improve racial equity in participatory governance, and enact informed anti-racism policy, data must be disaggregated by race.<sup>60 61</sup> This extends to data disaggregated by other indicators such as gender and disability. Without it, the city will have difficulty truly assessing the impact of its services and projects on equity, including for racialized groups. To give a quick example, the COVID-19 pandemic has had devastating effects on everyone, but race-based data in the U.S., the UK, some Ontario municipalities, and other jurisdictions have revealed that Black people are dying of the virus at disproportionately high rates.<sup>62</sup> While the data in itself does not change this fact, it does allow municipalities to better target their COVID-19 response to address this disparity. The same cannot be said for cities like Calgary, where the Government of Alberta has not made such data publicly available.<sup>63</sup> This same logic applies when looking at the city’s response to various community needs. For the city’s work to be anti-racist, it needs to know how said work impacts racialized Calgarians. The more race-based data the City of Calgary has access to, the better it will be able to determine how proposed projects impact racialized communities and how to mitigate those effects.

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<sup>57</sup> McKenzie, Rethinking the Definition of Institutional Racism, p.5

<sup>58</sup> Communities Count. (2019). King County Population Dashboard. Retrieved from: <https://www.communitiescount.org/population-dashboard>

<sup>59</sup> King County. (n.d.). Maps of King County demographics. Retrieved from: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/tools-resources/maps.aspx>

<sup>60</sup> Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government. (2020). *Commission for Racial Justice & Equality report*. Retrieved from: <https://www.lexingtonky.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/Commission%20for%20Racial%20Justice%20%26%20Equality%20-%20member%20list%207.17.20.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council. (n.d.) *Equality Impact Assessment Guidance and Template*. Retrieved from: <https://bbsrc.ukri.org/documents/equality-impact-assessment-guidance-template-pdf/>

<sup>62</sup> Labby, B. (2020). *Race-based data must be collected to help fight COVID-19, advocates say*. CBC Calgary. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/demographic-data-collection-data-alberta-anti-racism-1.5680698>

<sup>63</sup> *ibid.*

## CASE STUDY: The Power of Disaggregated Data in the UK

The UK has been systematically conducting EIAs (in this case standing for *equality* impact assessments) for 20 years and collects data for geographic areas as small as the lower layer super output areas (LSOAs), which encompass an average population of 1,500 people or 650 households.<sup>64</sup>

In one example, the London borough of Lambeth conducted an EIA to determine how its transportation strategy plan would impact groups with protected characteristics, such as race, gender, age, disability, and sexual orientation.<sup>65</sup> Thanks to data on cycling rates and exposure to poor air quality and road safety, in addition to data disaggregated by race at the neighbourhood level, the borough was able to determine the strategy's impact on Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) residents in a very localized way.

In the London borough of Haringey, the council posts ward-level equity data (including data on race and disability) to better inform its EIAs. This, in turn, improves public participation, as “council officers are advised to seek the views of people who share protected characteristics to find out how it is likely to affect them, and to use those views to inform their impact assessments and recommendations to Councillors.”<sup>66</sup> It is worth noting that both boroughs (and perhaps many others not examined by this scoping review) transparently and systematically include EIA reports on their websites, with Haringey specifically focusing on EIAs as they pertain to housing, people, place, economy, and the council itself.<sup>67</sup>

### Actionable Areas for Calgary

1. Develop and implement an intersectional disaggregated data strategy.
  - a. The City of Calgary has already committed itself to a disaggregated data strategy as part of its Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) Strategy.<sup>68</sup> As it stands, the strategy aims to prioritize data on gender, but the City must prioritize data collection based on race, disability, immigration status, and other politically oppressed characteristics. It will be difficult to conduct adequate (R)EIAs without this data and, consequently, difficult for the City to genuinely assess and monitor whether it is successfully implementing anti-racist practices in an intersectional way.

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<sup>64</sup> Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion. (2019.) *LSOAs, LEPs and lookups : A beginner's guide to statistical geographies*. Retrieved from: <https://ocsi.uk/2019/03/18/lsos-leps-and-lookups-a-beginners-guide-to-statistical-geographies/>

<sup>65</sup> London Borough of Lambeth. (2019). *Transportation Strategy Equity Impact Assessment*. Retrieved from: [https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/696235/response/1665622/attach/6/Transport%20Strategy%20Equality%20Impact%20Assessment.pdf.pdf?cookie\\_passthrough=1](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/696235/response/1665622/attach/6/Transport%20Strategy%20Equality%20Impact%20Assessment.pdf.pdf?cookie_passthrough=1)

<sup>67</sup> Haringey Council. (2020). *Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA)*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/local-democracy/about-council/equalities/equality-impact-assessments- eqia#results>

<sup>68</sup> Haringey Council. (2020). *Equality Impact Assessments 2019-20*. Retrieved from: <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/local-democracy/about-council/equalities/equality-impact- assessments/equality-impact-assessments-2019-20>

<sup>69</sup> City of Calgary. (2019). *Gender Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy*. Retrieved from: <https://www.calgary.ca/csp/cns/gender-equality-week.html?redirect=/gender>



2. Use disaggregated data at every step before, during, and after implementation.
  - a. Make use of disaggregated data to improve racial equity in Calgary.

Beyond equity assessments, disaggregated data also allows for a clearer understanding of needs, which could allow the City of Calgary to have a more thorough understanding of who has yet to be included in participatory forms of governance.<sup>69</sup> The practice of publishing EIAs on the city website is also one to emulate, as it is a marker of the city's commitment to systematic and transparent efforts towards addressing racial equity issues and monitoring progress, which in turn encourages more public participation.
  - b. While REIAs use disaggregated data to evaluate the impact of proposed projects, it is difficult to know how a project has impacted equity-seeking groups once implemented. The City of Calgary can take the UK approach one step further by conducting post-mortem REIAs once projects have been completed and in the years following, with community input. The report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Coalition of Cities Against Racism suggest taking a longitudinal approach to assessing the impact over time.<sup>70</sup>
3. Employ an intersectional analysis to data. How would a new transportation or housing project impact 2-Spirit Indigenous people or Indigenous women and girls, for example?

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<sup>70</sup> O'Hagan, A. et al. (2019). *Participatory budgeting, community engagement and impact on public services in Scotland*. Public Money & Management. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09540962.2019.1678250>

<sup>71</sup> Icart, J-C., Labelle, M. & Antonius, R. (2005). *Indicators for evaluating municipal policies aimed at fighting racism and discrimination*. International Coalition of Cities Against Racism Discussion Papers Series #3. Montreal: Centre for Research on Immigration, Ethnicity and Citizenship, UQAM.

## PART 2: PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE

Part of the City's commitments as a member of the Coalition of Inclusive Municipalities is to "involve citizens by giving them a voice in initiatives and decision-making."<sup>71</sup> One of the markers of an unequal city is a lack of decision-making power and access to government, especially as it pertains to marginalized communities.<sup>72</sup> Participatory governance, if executed well, can help the City build genuine relationships with Indigenous and racialized community groups whereby the two become city-building partners.

Municipalities that plan to integrate anti-racist practices would benefit from reaching out to and making space for urban Indigenous, racialized, and other equity-seeking groups (i.e., LGBTQ groups, people with disabilities) to meaningfully participate in policy co-production<sup>73</sup> and in the city life as responsible citizens. According to Belanger and Walker, co-production has been described as "government and community-based actors work[ing] together from problem or issue identification to priority setting through to programs and services, and onwards."<sup>74</sup> Literature suggests allowing space or a permanent seat at the table when decisions on budgets, infrastructure investments, and land-use or development planning are made.<sup>75</sup>

However, attempts at participatory governance often fail to be anti-racist when systemic racism is not acknowledged and left unchallenged. In one such situation relating to participatory budgeting in Scotland, researchers concluded that attempted "to effect transformation in relations between communities and local authorities requires a clear recognition of existing power imbalances between communities, citizens, civil society, and that these power relations must change."<sup>76</sup>

Such power imbalances have been observed in Canadian municipalities that attempted to build partnerships with urban Indigenous people to address various issues, such as housing and homelessness,<sup>77</sup> urban planning, and economic development.<sup>78 79 80</sup> Some of the challenges are often attributed to the refusal to recognize Indigenous and

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<sup>71</sup> Stewart, C. (2007). p. 5

<sup>72</sup> United Nations Task Team on Habitat III. (2015). *Habitat III Issue Papers: Inclusive Cities*. United Nations Conference on Housing and sustainable Development. Retrieved from: [http://uploads.habitat3.org/hb3/Habitat-III-Issue-Paper-1\\_Inclusive-Cities-2.0.pdf](http://uploads.habitat3.org/hb3/Habitat-III-Issue-Paper-1_Inclusive-Cities-2.0.pdf)

<sup>73</sup> Dekruyk (2017)

<sup>74</sup> Belanger and Walker, 2009, 120

<sup>75</sup> United Nations Task Team on Habitat III. (2015). *Habitat III Issue Papers: Inclusive Cities*. United Nations Conference on Housing and sustainable Development. Retrieved from: [http://uploads.habitat3.org/hb3/Habitat-III-Issue-Paper-1\\_Inclusive-Cities-2.0.pdf](http://uploads.habitat3.org/hb3/Habitat-III-Issue-Paper-1_Inclusive-Cities-2.0.pdf)  
United Nations Task Team on Habitat III. (2015). *Habitat III Issue Papers: Inclusive Cities*. United Nations Conference on Housing and sustainable Development. Retrieved from: [http://uploads.habitat3.org/hb3/Habitat-III-Issue-Paper-1\\_Inclusive-Cities-2.0.pdf](http://uploads.habitat3.org/hb3/Habitat-III-Issue-Paper-1_Inclusive-Cities-2.0.pdf) p. 10

<sup>76</sup> Walker, 2008

<sup>77</sup> Belanger & Dekruyf, 2017

<sup>78</sup> Heritz, 2018

<sup>80</sup> Wood, 2003

racialized people as collaborative partners while others might be integral to the neoliberal framework, which focuses on market and capital and not necessarily on social and community development for the people.<sup>81 82</sup>

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## **PRACTICE #4: PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING**

One of the most powerful ways the City can meet its goal of making Indigenous and racialized citizens equal partners in municipal decision-making is through participatory budgeting (PB). Municipal budgets are central to any city's operations, and "city budgets are important places to prioritize racial equity through targeted investment."<sup>83</sup> PB, a practice that originated in Brazil in 1989, "is a democratic process in which community members directly decide how to spend part of a public budget."<sup>84 85</sup> Municipalities have adapted PB in different ways, from allocating a certain amount of funds to be disbursed across a variety of local initiatives to asking the public how the municipal budget should be allocated, often through digital campaigns.<sup>86</sup>

The concept has also seen a resurgence in the past year, after the police killing of George Floyd, as grassroots movements across the U.S. called for anti-racist "people's budgets." In November 2020, Los Angeles residents voted in favor of Measure J, a motion "which allocates at least 10% of the County's locally generated, unrestricted funding to address racial injustice through community investments such as youth development, job training, small business development, supportive housing services, and alternatives to incarceration."<sup>87</sup>

When implemented through an equity lens, "PB processes can intervene to address existing inequalities and be drivers for change."<sup>88</sup> PB has a better chance of engaging marginalized and underrepresented communities when the issues up for deliberation have a direct impact on said communities.<sup>89</sup> In practice however, PB has had a tendency to favor the desires of whiter, wealthier, and better educated citizens, as well as a tendency to instrumentalize the diversity of participants for political gain, regardless of how meaningful and representative that engagement is.<sup>90 91 92</sup> This is another example of how

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<sup>81</sup> Heritz, 2018

<sup>82</sup> Imbroscio, 2016

<sup>83</sup> National League of Cities. (n.d.). *Budget Decisions for Racial Equity Impact*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nlc.org/resource/budget-decisions-for-racial-equity-impact/>

<sup>84</sup> New York City Council. (n.d.). *Participatory Budgeting*. Retrieved from: <https://council.nyc.gov/pb/>

<sup>85</sup> Wylie, B. & Ebrahim, Z. (2021). *Shared Governance: A Democratic Future for Public Spaces*. Safe in Public Space. Retrieved from: <https://www.safeinpublicspace.com/content/shared-governance-a-democratic-future-for-public-spaces>

<sup>86</sup> Pastor, S. (2020). *Participatory Budgeting in 3 Case Studies*. Citizen Lab. Retrieved from: <https://www.citizenlab.co/blog/civic-engagement/participatory-budgeting/participatory-budgeting-in-3-case-studies/>

<sup>87</sup> County of Los Angeles. Measure J "Reimagine LA": 2021 Spending Recommendations Process. Chief Executive Office. Retrieved from: <https://ceo.lacounty.gov/measure-j-2021-spending/>

<sup>88</sup> O'Hagan et al., 2019, p. 7

<sup>89</sup> Pin, L. (2020). Race, citizenship and participation: Interrogating the racial dynamics of participatory budgeting, *New Political Science*, 42(4), 578-594. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.1080/07393148.2020.1840199>

<sup>90</sup> Su, C. (2017). *Beyond inclusion: Critical race theory and participatory budgeting*. *New Political Science*, 39, 126-142.

<sup>91</sup> O'Hagan, A., et al. (2019).

<sup>92</sup> Pin, L. (2020).

diversity as a metric fails to confront harmful racial dynamics and is a barrier to anti-racist work. Various Canadian municipalities, including the City of Calgary, adopted PB. However, the approaches taken were not guided by equity lens. The launching of PB in Calgary focused on creating “an iPhone app to inform residents about the budget process and facilitate discussion through digital forums.”<sup>93</sup>

### **CASE STUDY: Participatory Budgeting in New York City**

In a study of PB in New York City (NYC) using a critical race theory (CRT) lens, the report found that civic participation did increase, including among traditionally disenfranchised groups, in part thanks to the city’s targeted outreach to LGBTQ communities, Spanish speakers, and multilingual assemblies. However, the proposals that tended to succeed came from those with more social capital, legal resources, and certain forms of knowledge and cultural capital.<sup>94</sup> In the end, seemingly neutral criteria of “feasibility” took precedence over community need and priority. For example, white parents advocating for more technology in their schools were more effective at pushing forward their ideas and getting them funded than marginalized communities with more urgent needs. Despite higher participation in neighbourhood assemblies, PB in NYC privileged groups who knew how to use political jargon to their advantage. Participation increased, but in a way that disproportionately privileged white and well-resourced individuals.

The failure to account for systemic racism is a recurring issue in PB, and it results in a failure to address power imbalances as they pertain to race, disability, gender, and other politically oppressed characteristics.<sup>95</sup>

### *Actionable Areas for Calgary*

1. Review Calgary’s previous experience with PB in 2011 to identify recommendations future PB.
2. Assess whether the City should formalize PB as its official budgeting process (this is also a recommendation echoed by Sustainable Calgary<sup>96</sup>).
3. Conduct an REIA with citizens at the outset to inform approaches to outreach,<sup>97</sup> procedural design, and data collection/analysis.  
Leverage community associations (CAs) to ensure that a wide variety of the public is engaged while paying particular attention to power dynamics within CAs.
4. Ensure that marginalized groups have a meaningful role in budgeting decisions before, during, and after implementation.

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<sup>93</sup> Flynn, A. (2017). Participatory budgeting--not a one-size-fit-all approach. [https://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/media\\_mentions/466](https://digitalcommons.osgoode.yorku.ca/media_mentions/466)

<sup>94</sup> Su, C. (2017).

<sup>95</sup> Pin, L. (2020)

<sup>96</sup> Sustainable Calgary. (2020). *Putting equity and climate accountability in our budget*. Retrieved from: <http://www.sustainablecalgary.org/the-blog/2020/11/19/towards-a-sustainable-2021-budget-part-i>

<sup>97</sup> O’Hagan, A., et al. (2019).

5. Consider PB as one of the many ways the City can transform its relationship with Indigenous, Black, and other underserved communities.

During the City's 2011 exercise in PB, preliminary research "established that there was a lack of trust by the public in the municipal government specifically around the extent to which the public's contributions would be valued and considered by decision-makers."<sup>98</sup> Repairing this relationship includes taking seemingly aspirational ideas seriously and investing in community-led work that genuinely addresses needs (with a priority for community groups that actually represent the population marginalized by racism). Historically, anti-racist and decolonized approaches to policy and practice "routinely elicit simplistic responses within mainstream environments; where pragmatism is prioritized over justice"<sup>99</sup> and notions of pragmatism have been used to maintain the status quo and shut down ideas that could have real impacts for underserved communities.<sup>100</sup> Defunding the police to fund community-led support services, for example, has long been discredited as unfeasible, but is now being explored by cities across North America, including Calgary.<sup>101</sup><sup>84</sup> For PB to have a transformational impact, justice and racial equity must be a priority and the notions of "pragmatism" and "feasibility" must be assessed through a racial equity lens. This is a long-term process that can help the City build meaningful relationships with all Calgarians. It is ultimately worth exploring whether making "participatory budgeting a **fixed part of your community's budgeting cycle...** will help you boost engagement and strengthen your local democracy" (emphasis in original).<sup>102</sup>

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## **PRACTICE #5: PARTICIPATORY PLANNING**

Municipal governments committed to democratic processes take the time to engage with their citizens, to inform, consult, listen, and empower them through participatory planning.<sup>103</sup> Participatory planning practices have been observed mainly around the urban geographies and neighbourhood land and infrastructure planning, ranging from urban gardens to urban redevelopment to community development. Most existing literature comes from the U.S. Literature on participatory planning is scarce in Canada and does not reflect the four criteria that were used to select the best practices present. Participatory planning in Indigenous and racialized communities tends to take place as a result of imminent gentrification.

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<sup>98</sup> Hamilton, A. (2014). p. 63

<sup>99</sup> Philips, L. (2021). *Want safer cities and public spaces? Invest in BIPOC-led work*. Safe in Public Space. Retrieved from: <https://www.safeinpublicspace.com/content/want-safer-cities-and-public-spaces-invest-in-bipoc-led-work>

<sup>100</sup> Su, C. (2017).

<sup>101</sup> Toy, A. (2020).

<sup>102</sup> Lodewijckx, I. (2021). *8 steps to participatory budgeting*. Citizen Lab. Retrieved from: <https://www.citizenlab.co/blog/civic-engagement/steps-to-effective-participatory-budgeting/>

<sup>103</sup> Levenda, A. et al. (2020). Rethinking public participation in the smart city. *The Canadian Geographer*, 64(3), 344–358.

**Gentrification** — the displacement of lower-income residents by more affluent populations — has been on the policy agenda for many cities in the Western world that seek revenues and the beautification of the city landscape.<sup>104</sup> While gentrification is commonly known to be detrimental to poor communities, and in particular the racialized poor, many cities see urban redevelopment as a colour-blind innovation that benefits all residents equally, a perspective that allows “political and economic actors — city officials, realtors, developers, lenders — to advance their capitalist interest.”<sup>105</sup> There is extensive literature on failed participatory planning.<sup>106 107</sup>

Some Canadian cities, including the City of Calgary, have shown interest in engaging Indigenous people in planning. While this is a positive indication that municipalities can build relationships with urban Indigenous communities and those in adjacent reserves, the initiated practices have shown many limitations.

A survey conducted to evaluate the “True Colour of Surrey Project” in the City of Surrey, BC, produced six key findings to further inform the Surrey and Vancouver municipalities on supporting and enhancing anti-racist projects, programs, and models. Most of these programs focused on three areas: education, advocacy, and empowerment. Unfortunately, the scan found that of the 53 programs initiated in Surrey, only 22 initiatives are still active, with only four being active in Surrey. The results of this survey confirms other studies that have found community-municipality partnerships on issues of racism and other inequities to be short-lived.<sup>108</sup>

A study<sup>109</sup> exploring seven municipalities across Canada (Vancouver, Edmonton, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Yellowknife, Winnipeg, and Toronto) identified five areas of highest priority, opportunities, and challenges to consider in improving municipal–Indigenous communities. They included 1) citizen participation and engagement; 2) governance interface — municipal and Aboriginal; 3) Aboriginal culture as municipal asset; 4) economic and social development; and, 5) urban reserves, service agreements, and regional relationships.

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<sup>104</sup> Anderson, B. M. Sternberg, C. (2012). Non-White gentrification in Chicago's Bronzeville and Pilsen: Racial economy and the intraurban contingency of urban redevelopment. *Urban Affairs Review*, 49(3), 435-467.

<sup>105</sup> Wilson, D. (2009). Racialized poverty in US cities: Toward a refined racial economy perspective. *The Professional Geographer*, 61 (2), 139-50.

<sup>106</sup> Dávila, A. (2004). Empowered culture? New York City's empowerment zone and the selling of El Barrio. *ANNALS, AAPSS*, DOI: 10.1177/0002716204264940; Newman, K. (2004). Newark, decline and avoidance, renaissance and desire: From disinvestment to reinvestment. *ANNALS, AAPSS*, 594, DOI: 10.1177/0002716204264963

<sup>107</sup> Nelson, J. & Dunn, K. (2017). Neoliberal anti-racism: Responding to 'everywhere but different' racism. *Progress in Human Geography*, 41(1), 26–43.

<sup>108</sup> Valenzuela, J., R. González, and J. Stewart. 2019. "Monterey County: From Disenfranchisement to Voice, Power, and Participation." *Race Forward*. Retrieved from:

([https://www.raceforward.org/system/files/pdf/reports/RaceForward\\_Monterey\\_FullReport\\_2020.pdf](https://www.raceforward.org/system/files/pdf/reports/RaceForward_Monterey_FullReport_2020.pdf))

<sup>109</sup> Walter, 2008.

In the area of citizen participation and engagement, the participants (including city planners) indicated that the work was mainly done through community/neighbourhood associations (i.e., recreational services or local area planning) run by resident volunteers. This kind of approach often privileges an “area-based” logic over one that is more explicitly “people-centred”<sup>110</sup> and can only engage those who have time to volunteer. The volunteer community/neighbourhood approach also lacks formal processes that regularize the initiated working relationship between city council and Indigenous communities. These kinds of relationships do not enhance the idea of planning together because consultations are sporadic and carried out differently each time, and only when it is convenient for city staff, or become reactionary in nature or politically charged.<sup>111</sup>

Belanger, Dekruyk, and Walter (2018) use the example of the attempted partnership between the City of Calgary and Indigenous communities in the planning of the Paskappoo Slopes development. Trinity Development Group, a real estate development company, had a proposal to build a ski village that was to include a mix of retail shops, office space, and homes at the foot of the Paskappoo Slopes. According to the authors, concerns were raised by the City about the environmental impact and anticipated traffic problems, which were addressed by Trinity altering the plan to make it a pedestrian-friendly space. The Indigenous Elders’ input was largely absent as the proposal was developed. Indigenous Elders opposed the project and its development’s evolution because they feared the construction would endanger a historically vital “buffalo kill site” they wanted protected. These concerns were not addressed. Rather, they were asked to contribute to the amendment of the proposal and participate in the naming of the community. When they proposed a name in a Blackfoot language (Aiss ka pooma), it was denied on the grounds that non-Indigenous Calgarians would find it difficult to pronounce. In the end, the whole notion of participating in the planning was reduced to naming streets. As in many other Canadian municipal–Indigenous partnerships, consultations were sporadic and convened for symbolic purposes rather than real participatory planning, which would require that Canadian municipalities and Indigenous groups come to the table as equal partners and Indigenous groups be recognized as first occupants. Similar examples of symbolic participation have been observed in other Canadian municipal–Indigenous relations.<sup>112 113</sup>

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Promising partnerships are those that “lever significant amounts of private sector investment to ‘match’ the investment of public resources.”<sup>115</sup> In situations where corporate interests override democratic planning processes, only strong collective voices have the

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<sup>110</sup> Walter, 2008

<sup>111</sup> Ibid

<sup>112</sup> Belanger & Walker, 2009

<sup>113</sup> Heritz, 2018

<sup>114</sup> Walker, 2008

<sup>115</sup> Mayo, M. (1997). Partnerships for regeneration and community development. Some opportunities, challenges and constraints. Critical Social Policy 52 ISSN 0261-0183 SAGE Publications.

capacity to resist these forces.<sup>116</sup> As Young rightly observes, “Aboriginal rights and entitlements, are not part of whatever their legal bearing in cities, do not form part of the taken-for-granted governance framework of municipal governments.”<sup>117</sup>

Indigenous in urban settings that have formed community organizations to serve their people and organize, the municipalities have noticed them and responded to their needs to a certain extent. However, engaging in participatory planning remains symbolic.

In recent years, organizations of other racialized groups, such as Black Canadians in cities that have the highest rates, have had to form coalitions to have their voices heard. It was in 2018 that The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism (CABR)<sup>118</sup> established a collaborative initiative between the city of Toronto and Torontonians of African descent. CABR was given a Unit permanent corporate office at the City to ensure the full implementation of the 22 recommendations and 80 actions of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism, which was unanimously adopted by City Council in December 2017. The Canadian municipalities may be challenged if every racialized group demanded a unity at the city. Municipalities that engaged racial equity in participatory planning may be better positioned to limit the fragmentation of services. It remains too early to integrate CABR as a promising practice because of lack of systematic evaluation. Below are a few potential examples, mainly from the U.S.

### **CASE STUDY: Roxbury Master Plan in Boston**

Roxbury, one of seventeen neighbourhoods in Boston, is a predominantly Black neighbourhood (25.3%) that is also home to a sizable Latino population (14.4%) and people of Asian descent (7.5%). However, the neighbourhood’s diverse population is underrepresented in the City of Boston. This lack of political representation has limited Roxbury residents’ ability to leverage power for community needs. However, what the neighbourhood lacks in formal political power, it has made it up through historically strong community activism.

It is within this context that the Roxbury Master Plan was initiated at the turn of the century. In 1999, the Boston Redevelopment Authority issued a call for proposals to help design a master plan for the Roxbury neighbourhood to build a 21st century community with a clear vision, a decision-making framework, economic development, and the distribution of land. The Roxbury Neighbourhood Council provided leadership and worked with the Boston Redevelopment Authority to organize community input.

The development of Roxbury’s master plan involved the poorest neighbourhood in Boston and highlighted fundamental differences in how community representatives approached economic development in contrast to key institutional actors in a city’s governing coalition, as well as smart growth. The evolution of the Roxbury Master Plan

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<sup>116</sup> Jennings, J. (2004). Urban planning, community participation, and the Roxbury master plan in Boston. *ANNALS, AAPSS*, 594, 12-32. DOI: 10.1177/0002716204264947

<sup>117</sup> Young, 2011, p. 205

<sup>118</sup> 1st Annual Report Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit 2018-2019. <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/97ab-cabr-annual-report-2018-2019.pdf>



centred community participation by providing leadership opportunities for community residents and activists while ignoring the distribution and use of power and resources based on race and class. By pushing for a participatory planning framework, the City's governing coalition ensured that local residents were active participants in the planning and able to question the developer about how the urban development would benefit them. The components that facilitated this participatory process and negotiations involved:

1. Frequent, open, and widely advertised meetings;
2. Opportunities for resident feedback regarding proposals;
3. Decision-making after consultations with many individuals and organizations working in the community;
4. Outreach and distribution of information; and
5. Partnership with a community organization, the Roxbury Neighbourhood Council, in planning public dialogues.

From this partnership plan, the Roxbury Master Plan achieved important wins, including:

1. Adoption and publication of principles that aimed to guide decision-making and ensure that residents would not be displaced as a result of this planning effort; that the needs of residents would drive the design of strategies for housing and other services; and that the plan would be holistic in terms of linking economic development with other areas such as housing, the building of public schools, and improvement in transportation.
2. Adoption of the final governance plan for implementation of principles and features of the Roxbury Master Plan and the establishment of an oversight committee formed by locals and City officials to monitor and evaluate the progress of the project.

The Roxbury Master Plan emerged as an arena for the systemic critique of economic development that prioritizes bigger institutions and their interests over the well-being of neighbourhoods. It offered alternatives that ensured the social and economic well-being of Roxbury residents, other neighbourhoods, and the city at large. Through the active participation of the residents, controversial suggestions from big companies that did not benefit them directly were dismissed, and they opted for a more balanced approach to economic development that supported small businesses.<sup>119</sup>

### *Actionable Areas for Calgary*

1. One of the ways the city can balance power within its governance is to create intermediary spaces in which to readjust the boundaries between the government and its citizens. The city government must exercise flexibility, provide the economic and social development resources necessary to facilitate and strengthen its partnership with community groups,<sup>120</sup> promote anti-racist practices, and encourage its community partners, including for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, to play their part.

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<sup>119</sup> Jennings, 2014

<sup>120</sup> Frank, F. (2012). Participatory governance as deliberative empowerment. The cultural politics of discursive space. *American Review of Public Administration*, 36 (1), 19-40.

2. As indicated, the few Canadian municipal–Indigenous practices that were attempted failed to reach policy co-production and have limited participatory planning due to the lack of formal structures for engaging urban Indigenous as citizens and recognizing their self-determination. The cities that made the effort to do so challenged the power of the federal government to hold all the legal structures and resources to uphold treaty relations. To overcome local forms of resistance to full citizenship and participation in urban planning, the City of Calgary could work with the Indigenous Relations Office at City Hall to start developing anti-racist policies that would facilitate more genuine and mutual partnerships in policy co-production in urban planning.
3. Another common critique from the failed co-planning is that some city officials resist or ignore the input of Indigenous and other racialized groups as citizens with equal rights and responsibilities to have a voice in the matters of the city planning. A commitment to anti-racism and anti-Indigenous racism requires holding city officials accountable for their behaviours. One way of doing so would be putting REIAs in place and monitoring their application and impacts.

## **PRACTICE #6: RECONCILIATION THROUGH LAND AND REPARATIONS**

In April 2019, the City of Calgary adopted its Social Wellbeing Policy.<sup>121</sup> One of its four goals is a commitment to advancing truth and reconciliation, which, according to the policy, “is about acknowledging what has happened in the past, addressing the impact of colonial policies and then following through with action.”

Indigenous and racialized communities continue to endure the compounded effects of colonialism and systemic racism in Calgary and throughout Canada today.<sup>122</sup> For Indigenous people, this has resulted in displacement and cultural genocide through residential schools, the child welfare system, and other forms of state-sanctioned violence.<sup>123</sup> Black settlers from the late 1800s/early 1900s endured racism as soon as they migrated to Alberta.<sup>124</sup> <sup>125</sup> This is true in more recent history as well, as Indigenous, Asian, Black, and other racialized groups continue to face systemic racism across Calgary’s institutions and public sphere.<sup>126</sup> <sup>127</sup> <sup>128</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> City of Calgary. (2019). *The Social Wellbeing Policy*. CP2019-01.

<sup>122</sup> Navia, D., Henderson, R. I., & Charger, L. F. (2018). *Uncovering colonial legacies: Voices of Indigenous youth on child welfare (dis)placements*. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 49(2), 146–164.

<sup>123</sup> Murray, K. (2017). The Violence Within: Canadian Modern Statehood and the Pan-territorial Residential School System Ideal. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 50(3), 747–772. doi:10.1017/S0008423916001189

<sup>124</sup> Yarhi, E. (2020). Order-in-Council P.C. 1911-1324 — the Proposed Ban on Black Immigration to Canada, *Historica Canada*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/order-in-council-pc-1911-1324-the-proposed-ban-on-black-immigration-to-canada>

<sup>125</sup> Bailey, J., Este, D. & Dobbins, D. (2018). *We are the Roots: Black Settlers and their Experiences of Discrimination on the Canadian Prairies*. [Documentary film]. Retrieved from: <https://player.vimeo.com/video/257364347?title=0&portrait=0&badge=0>

<sup>126</sup> Loppie, S., Reading, C. & de Leeuw, S. *Aboriginal Experiences with Racism and Its Impacts*. Prince George, BC: National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health. Retrieved from: <https://www.nccih.ca/docs/determinants/FS-Racism2-Racism-Impacts-EN.pdf>

<sup>127</sup> Shah, M. (2020). Canadians of Chinese ethnicity report widespread racism over coronavirus: survey. *Global News*. Retrieved from: <https://globalnews.ca/news/7091118/coronavirus-racism-chinese-canadians/>

<sup>128</sup> Grant, M. (2021). Trauma at the Station. *CBC News*. Retrieved from: <https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/trauma-at-the-station>

As pointed out by a recent report on the “Land back” movement<sup>129</sup> published by the First Nations-led think tank Yellowhead Institute, “One of the loudest and most frequent demands of Indigenous people in the relationship with settlers is for the return of the land.”<sup>130</sup> Calgary is located on traditional Blackfoot territory in Treaty 7 lands, an agreement made between the Government of Canada and the Plains First Nations (mostly the Blackfoot Confederacy). While it was meant to be a peace treaty, it is generally agreed that the Indigenous nations who signed Treaty 7 were misled into signing over their land rights and did not receive what was promised to them as part of this agreement.<sup>131</sup> As Chief Lee Crowchild of the Tsuut’ina First Nation said in a 2017 interview as he saw Treaty 7 on display at Fort Calgary: “We never really did give up the land. We never gave up resources. We just agreed that we’re going to share this, what we have here. We’re going to share this with you because it speaks to the core of who we are, how we look after people.”<sup>132</sup>

It thus follows that, in order for the City of Calgary to make right on its truth and reconciliation commitments, it might consider enacting policy that radically redefines its relationship to Indigenous communities and land. While reserves remain under federal jurisdiction, there is precedent, especially in the United States, for municipalities to return land to Indigenous communities as a form of reparations, which will be explored below.

Furthermore, while it is impossible to quantify the wide ranging effects of systemic racism, reparations are believed to be a necessary first step to reconciliation.<sup>133</sup> Reparations are an attempt to right historical wrongs through compensation. The concept has gained much traction in recent years, especially in regards to descendants of slaves in the United States,<sup>134</sup> but it has significant historical precedent, such as the reparations paid to Japanese-Americans who were interned during World War II and reparations paid to Holocaust survivors by Germany.<sup>135</sup> As such, this section will also consider how Calgary may use creative funding streams to put together a reparations fund as a way to commit itself to reconciliation and anti-racism in practice.

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<sup>129</sup> CBC Unreserved. (2021). *Land back: Movement to reclaim Indigenous land grows*. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/what-does-it-mean-to-give-land-back-to-indigenous-communities-1.5891912?vfz=medium%3Dsharebar>

<sup>130</sup> Yellowhead Institute. (2019). *Land Back: A Yellowhead Institute Red Paper*. p. 8. Retrieved from: <https://redpaper.yellowheadinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/red-paper-report-final.pdf>

<sup>131</sup> Tesar, A. (2019). *Treaty 7*. The Canadian Encyclopedia. Retrieved from: <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/treaty-7>

<sup>132</sup> Dippel, S. (2017). *‘We never really did give up the land’: Tsuut’ina chief urges public to see Treaty 7 document*. CBC Calgary. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/treaty-seven-indigenous-tsuut-ina-1.4180850>

<sup>133</sup> Timsit, A. (2020). *The blueprint the US can follow to finally pay reparations*. Quartz. Retrieved from: <https://qz.com/1915185/how-germany-paid-reparations-for-the-holocaust/>

<sup>134</sup> Ta-Nehisi Coates. (2014). *The Case for Reparations*. The Atlantic. Retrieved from: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/>

<sup>135</sup> Timsit, A. (2020).

## **CASE STUDY: A Municipality Returns Land to a Native Tribe**

In November 2018, the City of Eureka, California, passed a resolution that saw the transfer of land to the Wiyot Tribe, and made it official in October 2019 when it deeded 200 acres of land — an island called Tuluwat — back to its Native owners. This came nearly 160 years after a brutal massacre that left up to 250 tribal people dead at the hands of white vigilantes from Humboldt County. The return of this stolen land is believed by the National Congress of American Indians to be “the United States’ first known voluntary municipal land return achieved without sale, lawsuit, or trade” and has been heralded as a concrete example of reconciliation that other municipalities should consider taking on.

Additionally, in the years that the Wiyot had no jurisdiction over the land, part of Tuluwat Island had become a toxic wasteland from years of industrial activities and wanton waste disposal. This unconditional return of land, while a massive step towards healing for the Wiyot people, was also a major win for the environment. With the Wiyot people as stewards of Tuluwat Island, debris was removed, the salt was restored with native plants, and the bay is now a source of food for the community, supporting oyster farms and commercial fishermen.

### *Actionable Areas for Calgary*

1. Identify land to be returned to Indigenous communities in Calgary in consultation with said communities.
  - a. Although the Indigenous Policy Framework for the City of Calgary does not mention the return of land as part of the City’s commitment to Truth and Reconciliation, the City of Calgary could follow the recommendations of the Yellowhead Institute Red Paper mentioned above and begin by making a formal acknowledgement of the ways Indigenous nations in what is now Calgary were dispossessed of their lands and how this dispossession has been maintained through “ignoring, negotiation, coercion or enforcement.”
  - b. Furthermore, the City Calgary Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee (CAUAC) produced a report at the behest of the Calgary City Council that outlines ways in which the municipality can feasibly address the TRC Calls to Action. One of the recommendations in this report is for the relevant City business units to “work collaboratively to seek real estate, appropriate infrastructure, public buildings, gardens and parkland for Indigenous ceremonial, cultural, commemorative activities, as well as healing.” This is echoed by the Indigenous Gathering Place (IGP) Society, a non-profit searching for 5 to 10 acres of land in Calgary to serve as “a space where we share, connect, heal, renew and celebrate Indigenous culture. A place to protect Indigenous practices, languages; and Elders’ wisdom, oral and written teachings among all nations and all our relations.”

2. Work with the federal government to officially transfer land to Indigenous communities.
  - a. The City of Eureka case study is admittedly not 100 percent replicable, as land claim issues in Canada occur at the federal level. However, in collaboration with groups like the IGP Society, the City has a unique opportunity to serve as an example of reconciliation in practice. Current Indigenous Gathering Places across Canada tend to exist within university campuses, and the Town of Collingswood, ON, has built a space by its waterfront created by Indigenous designers. In collaboration with all necessary levels of the government, the City of Calgary can go beyond securing real estate or building singular structures by proposing that a portion of city-owned land be transferred back to Indigenous communities for use according to their disposition, just as the City of Eureka identified what it called “Surplus Land,” which then paved the way for the municipality to return the land to the Wiyot Tribe.

Ultimately, the City of Calgary should consider Chief Lee Crowchild’s understanding of Treaty 7 as an agreement for settlers and Indigenous communities to share the land in a way that does justice to the ideals of truth and reconciliation.

### **CASE STUDY: Funding Reparations Through Cannabis Revenues**

The City of Evanston, a Chicago suburb, is one of the first American cities to put in place a reparations for slavery program, which it plans to fund through the use of tax revenues from the sale of recreational cannabis.<sup>136</sup> The reparations fund will be aimed at the city’s African-American population, which has been disproportionately impacted by the different manifestations of legacies of slavery: Jim Crow laws, redlining, police brutality, the war on drugs, mass incarceration, and more, which in turn has adverse impacts on health, housing security, job security, and other social determinants of health. As the State of Illinois moved to legalize marijuana, Evanston’s city council voted to place a 3% tax on marijuana to use towards a reparations fund capped at \$10 million over the next 10 years and will also accept external donations.<sup>137</sup> The details of the disbursement are still being worked out, but Evanston Alderman Robin Sue Simmons, who proposed the reparations fund, has indicated a preference for direct payments to Black residents in the form of down payments for a home or technical training, for example.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> City of Evanston. (2019). *Establishing a City of Evanston Funding Source Devoted to Local Reparations*. City Council resolution 126-R-19. Retrieved from: <https://www.cityofevanston.org/home/showdocument?id=54614>

<sup>137</sup> Armus, T. (2019). *A Chicago suburb wants to give reparations to black residents. Its funding source? A tax on marijuana*. The Washington Post. Retrieved from: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2019/12/02/evanston-illinois-reparations-plan-african-americans-is-marijuana-tax/>

<sup>138</sup> *ibid.*

### *Actionable Areas for Calgary*

1. Identify in which context reparations could benefit Calgarians.
2. Find creative solutions to fund reparations.
  - a. The City of Calgary has no jurisdiction over cannabis revenues, as was the case in the Evanston model. However, this case study serves as an example of how creative funding mechanisms can be used to fund much-needed reparations. The City of Toronto and the Rexdale community, for example, signed a community benefits agreement (CBA) with the owners of Casino Woodbine (slated to be built in the area) to “mitigate the negative effects of expanded gaming and to leverage opportunities to benefit the Rexdale community and all equity-seeking groups across Toronto.”<sup>139</sup> This agreement has already resulted in \$5 million in casino revenues invested in a local child care centre, for example.<sup>140</sup>
3. Divert funds from the Calgary Police Service (CPS) towards a reparations fund.
  - a. There is one source of funding in particular that the City should be looking towards to fund reparations: the public safety budget (which includes the CPS). Property taxes account for half of the City’s operating budget, and of that, nearly a quarter goes towards public safety.<sup>141</sup> At about \$400 million, the CPS is the single biggest line item in the City’s budget. There has been a growing public cry for municipalities to defund the police in favour of social services. It would be fitting that money from the CPS budget — which overpolicing Indigenous, Black, and South Asian Calgarians and historically accounts for some of systemic racism’s most fatal consequences — should be diverted towards a reparations fund that will help to address said systemic racism and serve as a concrete step towards reconciliation with oppressed groups.

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<sup>139</sup> City of Toronto. (n.d.). *Community Benefits Agreement: Rexdale – Casino Woodbine*. Retrieved from: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/long-term-vision-plans-and-strategies/community-benefits-framework/community-benefits-agreements/>

<sup>140</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> City of Calgary. (2020). *Financial Task Force: Report and Recommendations*. C2020-0742.



# PART 3: BUILDING EQUITABLE & VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

An underlying assumption of interventions aiming to impact racial equity in communities is that equitable outcomes can be created. This type of community requires significant coordinated and comprehensive efforts, including resource allocation and investments, policies and procedures, and enforcement. A report from the Racial Equity Alliance notes that achieving strong communities requires the recognition of existing capacity within communities of colour; the anticipation and prevention of displacement of vulnerable residents, businesses, and community organizations; and promoting equitable access to amenities and services.

## **PRACTICE #7: CREATE EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS**

To create equitable spaces, there is a need to invest in environments that will enhance the health of communities through public amenities (e.g., schools, parks, green space, sidewalks, healthcare), access to affordable healthy food (e.g., grocery stores compared to so-called food deserts), improved environmental quality (e.g., soil and air quality), and safe spaces (e.g., low criminal activity, feeling of belonging).

Equitable development occurs when quality of life outcomes (e.g., housing, quality education, employment, healthy environments, and transportation) have equitable distribution in the city community, which in turn distributes the associated benefits equitably among people of all backgrounds.

## **CASE STUDY: Fruitvale Station Village (Oakland, CA)**

One example of an initiative that aimed to promote health and safety within the community was the development of Fruitvale Station Village in Oakland, California.<sup>142</sup> Fruitvale Village was a mixed-use development that included retail, office, and apartments adjacent to a busy transit hub. Originally, the Unity Council in the predominantly Latino community protested the proposed light rail park-and-ride development. They were eventually able to advocate for a mixed-use project (including housing, community services for seniors and youth, a Head Start centre, a charter high school, and several commercial and retail spaces), ultimately taking control of the development and operation of the space. The Government Alliance on Racism and Equity (GARE) report indicates that this new development has directly contributed to lowering neighbourhood crime and has helped to address commercial vacancy while promoting new developments in the neighbourhood, acting as an economic anchor. A recent study compared the Fruitvale Station neighbourhood with similar neighbourhoods (by demographic composition, income, and average rent). Over the same time period,

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<sup>142</sup> Government Alliance on Race and Equity. (2015). *Equitable development as a tool to advance racial equity*. Retrieved from <https://www.racialequityalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/GARE-Equitable-Development.pdf>

Fruitvale had higher income growth, higher educational attainment, and higher home ownership, all without significant gentrification. The authors report that during the period under study (2000–2015), Fruitvale lost only one percent of its Latino population (the primary population in this area before the development); however, with increasing rents facing all of the Bay area, the Unity Council notes the importance of maintaining affordable housing.<sup>143 144</sup>

### **CASE STUDY: Dudley Street Neighbourhood Initiative (Boston, MA)**

The Dudley Street Neighbourhood Initiative (DSNI) in Boston, Massachusetts,<sup>145</sup> was formed in 1984, when approximately one-third of the lots in the neighbourhood were vacant, due to abandonment and arson. With the aim of revitalizing the community, over half of the lots were rehabilitated, contributing 400 new homes, gardens, parks, orchards, playgrounds, schools, and community centres, with the DSNI winning eminent domain power to support their revitalization efforts through a community land trust. The community land trust is governed by the community members as part of a democratic ownership model. This community effort has helped to prevent displacement of community members, enhancing food security and increasing social cohesion.<sup>146</sup> The changes to the community have promoted multiple positive outcomes, especially as its longevity has promoted multigenerational impacts, with strong leadership, advocacy, mentorship, and community organizing for systems change. The DSNI has been successful in receiving community grants and promoting a strong, diverse community. As the homes are part of the community land trust, homeowners report that the mortgages are affordable and that affordability is extended across generations, as the resale price is limited to a 0.5% increase per year and capped at five percent after 10 years. This affordability has contributed to a low rate of foreclosures, with less than 0.5% of community land trust owners being in foreclosure compared to almost five percent in the conventional market.<sup>147120</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Baldassari, E. (2018). *Development without gentrification? Oakland's Fruitvale is the model, report says*. Retrieved from <https://www.mercurynews.com/2018/03/29/development-without-gentrification-oaklands-fruitvale-is-the-model-report-says/>

<sup>144</sup> Barreto, M., Diaz, S., & Reny, T. (2018). *Should I stay or Should I Go? How effective transit-oriented*

*development can lead to positive economic growth*. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Latino Policy & Politics Initiative. Retrieved from: <https://ucla.app.box.com/s/0ytk7qpq7filoc0gglwb8iuuxt94uk12>

<sup>145</sup> Dudley Street Neighbourhood Initiative. (n.d.) Our Mission. Retrieved from <https://www.dsni.org/about-us>

<sup>146</sup> Adaptation Clearinghouse. (2011). *Dudley Street Neighbourhood Initiative, Boston Massachusetts*. Retrieved from: <https://www.adaptationclearinghouse.org/resources/dudley-street-neighbourhood-initiative-boston-massachusetts.html>

<sup>147</sup> Loh, P. (2015). How one Boston neighbourhood stopped gentrification in its tracks. Retrieved from: <https://www.yesmagazine.org/issue/cities/2015/01/28/how-one-boston-neighbourhood-stopped-gentrification-in-its-tracks>



## **PRACTICE #8: ZONING**

Municipal zoning has often been critiqued as discriminatory in the sense that it may include exclusionary zoning (i.e., limited entry of minority populations into majority neighbourhoods through density restrictions)<sup>148</sup> or environmental racism (e.g., locating undesirable activities such as manufacturing, high traffic roadways, airports) in minority neighbourhoods.<sup>149</sup> Zoning can be used to deter the movement of poor or minority households into wealthier neighbourhoods and communities, for example, through the use of minimum lot sizes. This leads to minority populations being disproportionately isolated in poorer and less desirable neighbourhoods and decreasing residential mobility.

Single-family zoning policies (which only allow for single-family homes in a given neighbourhood) is a form of exclusionary zoning that reduces the ability of low-income families (including many racial minority families) to enter certain neighbourhoods. Community-city partnerships discussed in the previous section demonstrate the stakes of having exclusionary and segregated neighbourhoods. Participatory planning guided by anti-racist policies during the zoning process will address these inequities.

### **CASE STUDY: Minneapolis, Minnesota — Ban on Single-Family Zoning**

The Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan has recently eliminated single-family zoning policies citywide.<sup>150 151</sup> This drastic shift has focused on promoting racial and economic equity in the city, which had until that point allocated 70 percent of its residential land for single-family homes. The policies also created four other reforms:

1. Increased housing density proximate to transit hubs through the construction of three-to-six storey buildings.
2. The elimination of off-street minimum parking requirements.
3. An “inclusionary zoning” requirement where new apartment developments need to set aside 10 percent of units for moderate-income households.
4. Increased funding for affordable housing.

The intent of these changes was to make housing more affordable through the increase of housing supply (through increases in density), promote housing equity, and combat climate change by promoting public transportation and environmentally friendly developments.

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<sup>148</sup> Rothwell, T. J. & Massey, S. D. (2010). Density Zoning and Class Segregation in U.S. Metropolitan Areas. *Social Science Quarterly*, 91 (5). Special issue on inequality and poverty: American and International Perspectives pp. 1123-1143

<sup>149</sup> Sharkey, P. (2013). *Stuck in place: Urban neighbourhoods and the end of progress toward racial equality*. University of Chicago Press.

<sup>150</sup> Kahlenberg, R.D. (2019). *How Minneapolis Ended Single Family Zoning*. Retrieved from <https://tcf.org/content/report/minneapolis-ended-single-family-zoning/?session=1&agreed=1>

<sup>151</sup> Minneapolis City Council. (2019). *Welcome to Minneapolis 2040. The City's Comprehensive Plan*. Retrieved from <https://minneapolis2040.com/>

### *Actionable Areas for Calgary*

1. Address zoning change concerns.
    - a. Calgary has significant zoning for single-family homes, and although there has been a recent movement to promote mixed-model housing developments, there is still significant resistance to such development from homeowners, community associations, and the general public. The Minneapolis City Council also faced significant opposition to the proposed zoning reforms but was able to ratify the policy by addressing the concerns one by one. For example, there was a rumour that existing neighbourhood homes would be bulldozed to make room for multi-family homes, thus changing the character of a neighbourhood through overbuilding (e.g., fourplexes). Issues like this are characteristic of any city and any people going through change.
  2. Increase equitable participatory planning strategies.
    - a. The City of Calgary must partner with community stakeholders to make equitable decisions. The Minneapolis 2040 plan indicated that people were free to keep their homes as they existed. Attention was also drawn to the reality that many single-family homes in certain neighbourhoods were already being bulldozed and consolidated into “mini-mansions.” Similarly, the diversification of neighbourhoods was portrayed as a positive change. The presence of “inclusionary zoning” requirements in the policy also recognized that even high-end multi-family developments would have to have some units that were affordable.
  3. Explore inclusionary zoning as a tool for improving racial equity in Calgary.
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### **PRACTICE #9: CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE HOUSING**

Culturally Appropriate Housing (CAH) has been recognized for its potential to reduce racial and ethnic discrimination. CAH is an emerging need in Canada, with increasing numbers of new immigrants, refugees, and Indigenous families desiring housing that can meet their ethnic and cultural needs, rather than the Eurocentric housing on which Canada’s housing landscape is based. Dawson<sup>152</sup> notes that Canadian housing stock is based on a set of cultural assumptions regarding family life, relationships with the surrounding environment, and routines, and does not necessarily reflect culturally appropriate occupancy standards, building materials and practices, or layouts.

A lack of CAH can lead to a loss in cultural traditions and cultural connection, leading to decreased physical, mental, and emotional health.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Dawson, P. C. (2006). Seeing like an Inuit family: The relationship between house form and culture in Northern Canada. *Etudes Inuit/Inuit Stud.* 30, 113-135.

<sup>153</sup> Hadjiyanni, T. (2014). *Toward Culturally Sensitive Housing*. Retrieved from <https://mhponline.org/mhp-blogs/drafts/363-toward-culturally-sensitive-housing>

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has noted several benefits of CAH, including the encouragement of continuation of cultural practices, allowing for alternative family structures, lower costs, increasing sustainability, adaptive design, and increased well-being, health, and belonging.<sup>154</sup> In their 2019 report, they offer several strategies and case examples for improving CAH, including:

1. Dwelling and amenity design,
2. Construction methods and strategies,
3. Supportive services (e.g., non-clinical and social supports provided onsite), and
4. Delivery process.

There is also a recognized need for culturally sensitive housing that accommodates diverse ways of living, acknowledging that there are many ways of life and thus, there is a need for flexible and adaptive design. Culturally sensitive designs have both economic and environmental benefits, as they have greater market appeal (instead of just appealing to one cultural group or subset of the population) and can minimize the need for renovations and are consequently more environmentally friendly and sustainable. For example, a culturally sensitive design might account for Muslim women's need to wear a veil in the presence of men but also do the cooking (where a veil may be hazardous) by having a design that allows for a curtain between the kitchen and/or dining areas and the living room.<sup>155</sup>

### **CASE STUDY: Clayoquot Forest Communities Program “Qwii-qwip-sap: Standing Tree to Standing Home” Initiative**

In partnership with Ecotrust Canada, the Nuuchahnulth communities living on the west coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, undertook the Green & Culturally Appropriate Building Design Project, which aimed to build culturally appropriate homes for their First Nations communities.<sup>156</sup> These homes account for the traditional longhouse design, use of local materials, recognition of climate and geography, and the demographics and desires of the community (e.g., multigenerational families). Previous housing projects in the communities that used more mainstream building practices did not account for the unique climate in the community (temperate rainforest). This project also highlights the connection that Indigenous communities have to place and their commitment to their territory, recognizing that homes built with traditional knowledge will honour this commitment.

### **CASE STUDY: Amenity and Design for Housing for Hmong Americans in Minnesota**

Hmong Americans are an ethnocultural group that came from China and Southeast Asia. “Traditional” or mainstream homes hindered the Hmong American community from

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<sup>154</sup> Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation. (2019). *An exploration of approaches to advance culturally appropriate housing in Canada* Retrieved from: <http://scarp-hrg.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2019/06/Culturally-Appropriate-Housing-2019PLAN530-CMHC.pdf>

<sup>155</sup> Hadjiyanni, T. (2014).

<sup>156</sup> Ecotrust Canada. (2020). *Green and culturally appropriate building design*. Retrieved from: <https://ecotrust.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/ECBriefing-GreenHousing.pdf>

practicing their religious and cultural traditions as they could not host large events in their homes, with limitations such as small cooking spaces, small-sized appliances or sinks, and closed-off kitchens. Culturally sensitive design changes (which may be part of a universal design strategy that appeals to other cultures that value intergenerational or communal living) included large, open kitchens, dining rooms, and living spaces; storage areas, larger sinks, and more industrial appliances; and covered patios for cooking and storage use.<sup>157</sup>

### *Actionable Areas for Calgary*

As mentioned above, the City of Calgary is becoming very diverse. While CMHC notes that CAH is not specifically the responsibility of municipalities, the City of Calgary has pre-existing platforms through which it can negotiate to reflect the cultures and needs of its racially and ethnically diverse population. To this end, there are a number of things that City can do.

1. Establish working relationships with other levels of government to negotiate CAH that accommodate its ethnically and culturally diverse population.
2. Promote culturally appropriate housing design through participatory planning meetings.
3. Promote CAH through community amenity contributions, reduced fees, official plans, and zoning bylaws.
4. Build disaggregated data to better understand Calgary's unique cultural communities and their needs around housing, as what is appropriate for one cultural group may not be applicable to another.

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## **PRACTICE #10: PROPERTY TAXES**

Analyses of property tax in the United States have found that there is an “assessment gap” that has racial and ethnic minorities facing a disproportionate tax burden. For example, Black and Hispanic residents pay 10–13 percent higher taxes than white residents for the same public services. In an analysis of over 118 million homes with property taxes from 75,000 municipalities, the authors found that in almost every state, property tax assessments were higher in areas with more Black and Hispanic residents and that these differences were not linked to building or land composition but rather racial composition.<sup>158</sup> Historically, this may have been linked to tax assessors intentionally overvaluing properties owned by Black families. In the present day, however, this is likely linked to racial discrimination in property values, where properties owned by racial minorities appreciate more slowly than homes owned by white people,

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<sup>157</sup> Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation. (2019).

<sup>158</sup> Avenancio, Leon, C., & Howard, T. (2020). The assessment gap: Racial inequalities in property taxation. Retrieved from: [https://www.washingtonpost.com/context/the-assessment-gap-racial-inequalities-in-property-taxation/215957a4-d5ad-47cd-821a-070cf23b6bc7/?itid=lk\\_inline\\_manual\\_3](https://www.washingtonpost.com/context/the-assessment-gap-racial-inequalities-in-property-taxation/215957a4-d5ad-47cd-821a-070cf23b6bc7/?itid=lk_inline_manual_3)

likely due to the racial discrimination associated with minority neighbourhoods. Property assessors do not account for this disparity in appreciation and thus increase tax assessments at the same rate for both properties. This leads to property taxes for racial minority homeowners that are disproportionate to their homes' values.<sup>159</sup>

### **CASE STUDY: Property Taxes in Washington, DC**

Using available data on the racial distribution of home ownership, the DC Policy Center found that Black- and Hispanic-homeowners effectively paid more tax on their properties, meaning that the real property tax burden was a higher share of the market value of their homes compared to white homeowners. This indicated that there was a need to consider why property tax assessments may be racially discriminatory. The authors concluded that racial minority homeowners were less likely to appeal their tax assessment and less likely to be successful when they did appeal. Furthermore, tax assessments did not account for neighbourhood amenities even when home sales would be very sensitive to these amenities.

Canada's property tax system is different from the American model. However, little has been done to examine municipal property taxes from racial equity lens. Available literature suggests that the Canadian property system operates generally the same way it operated a hundred years ago, with city's property taxes existing mainly to fund "shared services such as policing, parks, fire services, and roads."<sup>160</sup> Within the governance system, provincial legislation governs property taxation. Property taxation differs from province to province but accounts for an average of half of municipal revenues across Canada. Alberta has the highest per capita municipal property taxes (\$1,732) and its municipalities are free to set their own property tax rates without provincial restriction.<sup>161</sup> While this may be a constraint for municipalities, this framework can allow flexibility for cities seeking to establish equity in property taxes.

### **Actionable Areas for Calgary**

As indicated above, the city of Calgary will benefit from having REIP along with disaggregated data to help assess issues and suggest policy to guide programs to overcome them and monitor progress. Regarding property taxes, property assessment data will determine if there is a disproportionate property tax burden in communities with large racialized populations.

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<sup>159</sup> Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research. (2020). *How Systemic Racism is Embedded in Property Taxes*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/evidence-based-living/202007/how-systemic-racism-is-embedded-in-property-taxes>

<sup>160</sup> Kitchen, H., Slack, E., & Hachard (2019). IMFG Perspectives. Property taxes in Canada: Current issues and future prospects.

<https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/98034/1/Perspectives-27-Kitchen-Slack-Hachard-Property-Tax-Issues-Prospects.pdf>

<sup>161</sup> *ibid.* p. 2

# CONCLUSION

This scoping review has highlighted ten practices, grouped in three areas of interventions in which the City of Calgary can integrate in its anti-racist initiatives. This scoping review is not exhaustive in nature; however, it points to the way forward for the anti-racist work the city plans to initiate. The researchers focused on literature on racism and anti-racist practices that could lead to transformational change at the municipal level. As the highlighted practices indicate, there are different domains in which the City of Calgary can invest to truly work on becoming an anti-racist city. The three parts were devised based on municipal jurisdictions and other areas of influence.

As researchers, we concluded that the topic of anti-racism is very broad and cuts across different disciplines. While the intention was to consider literature from four western countries that have many similarities in their socio-political histories, different countries and their citizens have engaged with anti-racist practices at varying degrees. The hope was to bring forward as many Canadian promising practices as possible. However, literature with implemented and documented case examples are from U.S., which is closest to Canada's government structures and sociopolitical histories.

Anti-racist policies and practices are urgent for both countries today. The public killing of George Floyd, the Black Lives Matter events, and the public consultations the City of Calgary conducted confirm the importance of this issue. Ten practices accompanied by cases studies and suggestions of actionable areas for Calgary provide the starting point for intentional and critical anti-racist initiatives. These practices may require a rethinking of existing services. They may also simply call the City of Calgary to innovate and take steps to do business differently. The discrimination and inequities against racialized Calgarians do not benefit the city, nor its citizens.

This scoping review excluded literature rooted in multiculturalism and diversity perspectives and did not explore anti-racist practices that pertain to city police or city-Indigenous relations. However, the highlighted practices are relevant for these other services. By mainstreaming anti-racist perspectives across its internal and external services, and paying attention to anti-Indigenous racism, the city of Calgary will be able to establish strong partnerships with different government and non-government stakeholders, and specifically racialized Calgarians, to make anti-racist policies and practices a reality.