



August 27, 2020

### Pickering Moves Forward with Anti-Black Racism Initiatives

Pickering, ON, August 26, 2020 – At the August 24, 2020 Council Meeting, the City of Pickering unanimously endorsed the Terms of Reference for the establishment of the Pickering Anti-Black Racism Taskforce (PABRT), which will report directly to Pickering Council.

As residents, volunteers, and recognized leaders of the local Black community, Celia Cooper, Michelle Francis, Esther Forde, and Nikosa Holland, will lead the recruitment and community consultation along with six additional residents, stakeholders, and experts. Once finalized, the mandate of this independent, community-led task force is to:

- Identify barriers and areas of opportunity, in order to enhance the shared experience and opportunities afforded to Black residents
- Identify and coordinate opportunities for stakeholder and community engagement
- Provide expert input and action on matters relating to the provision of anti-Black racism initiatives within the community
- Celebrate and promote the Black community, and promote Black culture

The establishment of the PABRT is part of a three-pronged approach, which Council endorsed to address racism, diversity, and inclusion within Pickering. For more information, the staff report and Terms of Reference can be found at [pickering.ca/antiblackracism](http://pickering.ca/antiblackracism).

#### **Quotes:**

“The Pickering Anti-Black Racism Taskforce will report directly to Pickering Council and make recommendations on combating anti-Black racism as it relates to municipal government and influence. This independent and community-driven initiative will force us to have difficult, but meaningful discussions on the Black experience. While change won’t happen overnight, we are pleased to engage our Black community in taking this major step forward in addressing this long-standing injustice.”

- Dave Ryan, Mayor

“The unanimous vote at Pickering Council is only the very beginning of the work that needs to be done. Now that we have this vote of confidence, we need to ensure that all voices are heard so that we can work together towards ending anti-Black racism in Pickering. There is still a lot of outreach, and information gathering/sharing still ahead to make the PABRT meaningful. Working directly with the

PABRT will help Council move decisively on the areas of concern that the Black community deems most pressing.”

- Celia Cooper, Pickering Anti-Black Racism Taskforce

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As the gateway to the east GTA, Pickering (population 94,000) is strategically located where Toronto, York and Durham Regions meet. An award-winning municipality, Pickering is slated for significant economic and residential growth; offering an unparalleled quality of life for those who live, work, and play here. Its dynamic City Centre has been designated by the Province of Ontario as both an Urban Growth Centre and Mobility Hub, and continues to evolve as a preferred destination for creative learning, memorable events, and unique experiences at the heart of a vibrant, connected, and engaged community.

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