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Subject: Written submission - General Committee meeting 19 September - Minutes of the Race Relations Committee

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To Members of Council:

Having served as Chair of Markham's Race Relations Committee (RRC) from October 2018 to April 2021, I fully support the request by current members that the RRC revert to a monthly meeting schedule.

In Markham's Diversity Action Plan, the first goal of Pillar 4: Stewardship of Money and Resources / Theme 9: Inclusive Resource Management and Financial Transparency is "Provide City resources and budgeting to support enhanced diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, anti-racism, and anti-discrimination efforts", with a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) being "Increased City resources for diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, anti-racism, and anti-discrimination initiatives". Reducing City staff resources to the RRC - a long-standing committee established to advise Council on diversity, equity, inclusion, anti-racism and anti-discrimination - directly contradicts this goal and KPI. This calls into question whether Council's stated commitment to the Diversity Action Plan is truly backed by substance and action. When circumstances become challenging, would the City of Markham's choices reflect a belief that diversity, inclusion and equity are core values to be upheld, or a belief that they are mere accessories that can be discarded? The reduction of City resources to the RRC strongly suggests the latter.

Both the Diversity Action Plan and the Eliminating Anti-Black Racism Action Plan have as Key Values "Accountability" and "Transparency". The RRC and its work are important means through which the City demonstrates these values. Racism thrives when institutions function opaquely and without regard to the people served. As Diversity and Eliminating Anti-Black Racism are long-term ongoing efforts, any action by the City that reduces accountability and transparency - whether intentional or consequential - is cause for concern. The level of support and resources provided by the City to the RRC must therefore be immediately restored to that prior to the recent cuts.

Thank you.

Andrew Yu