

RESOLUTION 2024-0355

Adopted by the Sacramento City Council

December 3, 2024

Adopting the Mayoral Reparations Initiative as a City-wide Initiative. (the “REPAIR” Resolution) Transitioning the Mayoral Reparations Initiative to a City Reparations Initiative

BACKGROUND

- A. On June 15, 2021, during its regular meeting, Council unanimously recognized the historic passage of California AB 3121 – legislation establishing a task force to study and develop reparation proposals for African American descendants of U.S. slavery.
- B. In June of 2021, Mayor Steinberg became a member of the Mayors Organized for Reparations and Equity (MORE) Coalition. The MORE coalition “stands on the belief that cities can — and should — act as laboratories for bold ideas that can be transformative for racial and economic justice on a larger scale and demonstrate for the country how to pursue and improve initiatives that take a reparatory approach to confronting and dismantling structural and institutional racism.” Mayor Steinberg directed his staff to begin researching and identifying resources for the effort.
- C. Over the past three years, Mayor Steinberg’s office has met and worked with local community members, leaders, and organizations as well as national organizations and other cities working within the reparations space to develop a baseline framework of information and resources for Sacramento’s effort. Two separate research grants were secured to support graduate students from the University of California, Davis (UC Davis) History Department to look through the City’s archives and identify specific periods and policies of discrimination in the City’s history.
- D. On November 17, 2020, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution declaring racism a public health crisis.
- E. On February 15, 2022, during its regular meeting, Council approved a midyear budget adjustment to continue the City’s commitment of establishing racial equity in culture and policy, this includes \$200,000 to support the Mayor’s Reparations work, including \$30,000 to fund the CityStart Initiative to develop a strategic blueprint for addressing the Black wealth gap in Sacramento and \$50,000 to fund a City Level Reparations Community Engagement (CLRCE) grant that went to five community-based organizations for community engagement, education, and surveys that will inform the next steps towards creating a municipal reparations committee.

- F. The City's CLRCE work, which is now completed, and the research conducted by UC Davis graduate students demonstrates a need for continued community engagement, education, research, and a deeper landscape analysis.
- G. On June 29, 2023, the Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans (pursuant to AB 3121) issued its final report to the California Legislature. The final report surveys the ongoing and compounding harms experienced by African Americans as a result of slavery and its lingering effects on American society today. It also proposes a comprehensive reparations plan in satisfaction of the direction set by AB 3121. Nearly a dozen bills are being considered as a result of final report.
- H. On September 10, 2024, Mayor and City staff, CLCRE grantees, and other careholders presented the Mayoral Reparations Initiative 2024 Progress Report to the Racial Equity Committee. Thereafter, the Racial Equity Committee directed City staff to work with the community on a resolution to make the Mayoral Reparations Initiative a City initiative for consideration of Council adoption.

BASED ON THE FACTS SET FORTH IN THE BACKGROUND, THE CITY COUNCIL RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1.

The Mayoral Reparations Initiative shall transition to the City Manager's Office for further analysis and identification of resources needed to expand initiative citywide.

SECTION 2.

The City will ensure that its reparation initiative remains transparent, inclusive, and accountable to the affected communities.

SECTION 3.

Exhibit A, the Mayoral Reparations Initiative 2024 Progress Report, is a part of this Resolution.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Exhibit A - Mayoral Reparations Initiative - - - 2024 Progress Report

Adopted by the City of Sacramento City Council on December 3, 2024, by the following vote:

Ayes: Members Guerra, Jennings, Kaplan, Maple, Talamantes, Thao, Valenzuela, Vang,
and Mayor Steinberg

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: None

Attest:  12/10/2024

Mindy Cuppy, City Clerk

The presence of an electronic signature certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy as approved by the Sacramento City Council.

Mayoral Reparations Initiative

- - -

2024 Progress Report

“We have power. We have power as a city and our power can take many forms and does take many forms. One power is to help decide the arc of the city by where and how we choose to invest public resources, taxpayer dollars, in our city. Our obligation it seems to me, among many others, is to ensure that we are continuing to invest in our neighborhoods, in our disadvantaged communities, with a focus on all communities but a special focus on our African American communities who still suffer the historical legacy of slavery...”

- Mayor Darrell Steinberg, June 15, 2021



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*"Being American is more than a pride we inherit - it's
the past we step into, and how we repair it."*

- Amanda Gorman, The Hill We Climb

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1 INTRODUCTION

Provides an overview of the mayoral reparations initiative while demonstrating how time was spent to build connections, trust, research, and resources for the work.

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1.1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1.1.1 *Ancestral Land and Labor Acknowledgements*

In Sacramento, we live and work upon the unceded territory of the Nisenan people, Southern Maidu, Valley and Plains Miwok, Patwin Wintun peoples, and people of the Wilton Rancheria.

As we acknowledge the foundation of our country was built upon the stolen land, liberty, and lives of Indigenous Peoples, we also acknowledge it was built through the stolen lives, liberty, and labor of enslaved African and African American Peoples.

We acknowledge this violent history offered no consent, compensation, or opportunity and that this history of colonization and the injustices that have been committed continue to have long-lasting and deeply entrenched impacts to Indigenous and African American communities.

We acknowledge that the harm from the theft of land and forced uncompensated labor extend through generations and that descendants have been and continue to be denied opportunity, resources, and wealth that their ancestors might otherwise have passed on to them had it not been stolen.

We acknowledge that other communities of color have experienced and continue to experience the effects of this discriminatory legacy as the United States expands and grows.

We recognize that each generation has an opportunity to acknowledge, address, and repair the past and it is our turn now.

1.1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1.1.2 2024 Progress Report Acknowledgements

We want to acknowledge and thank *Mayor Darrell Steinberg* for his leadership in pushing for reparations in Sacramento. We'd also like to acknowledge *Councilmember Rick Jennings* for his facilitation of early coalition meetings. We are also grateful for the 2022 *City Council* for passing a midyear budget recommendation from the mayor that provided seed funding for this work.

This Progress Report builds upon the CLRCE toolkit which was initially compiled as an introductory resource guide on the subject of reparations by *Deanna Drake*, MPH graduate student researcher for the mayor's office. We are grateful for her hard work. The early research and design were conducted by the following Sacramento community members who formed a working group that we want to acknowledge and thank for their invaluable contributions: *Monika Goins, Darius Lamont, Veronica Smith, and Stephen Walton*. We are likewise grateful for the input and support of *Alondra Bowens, Tavia Jenkins, and Jay Johnson* who also participated in the initial discussions.

Additional research into city records and archives was conducted by University of California, Davis PhD graduate student researchers for the Office of Mayor Steinberg. We are grateful for their contributions and dedication: *Omari Averette-Phillips, Taylor Black, Sareena Crawford, and Chantal Walker*.

We are also very thankful for the supervision, writing, and editing provided by UC Davis History Professor *Gregory P. Downs* who was instrumental in securing the public research grants that supported the graduate student research. Special thanks to *Dr. Troy Williams* of the Greater Sacramento Urban League for his initiative to help provide funds and guidance in support of the grant research.

We want to acknowledge the contributions of the following community members who provided feedback and expertise as part of the early Sacramento Community Reparations Coalition conversations and thank *Chinua Rhodes* from the Mayor's office for his help facilitating: *Rashid Amedu, Malaki Seku Amen, Jose Bodipo-Memba, Dwayne Crenshaw, Uumoiya Glass, Azizza Davis Goines, Ardell Lamond Harris, Chris Lodgson, DeAngelo Mack, Keisha Matthews, Kim Mims, Tina Roberts, Dr. Markesha Webster, Betty Williams, and Dr. Troy Williams*.

We'd like to acknowledge the initiative and work of *Kim Mims, Jonathan Burgess, and Chris Lodgson* to bring a ceremonial resolution to the City Council acknowledging the historic passage of AB 3121 and similarly thank former *Councilmember Jay Schenirer* and his staff, *Allison Joe*, for their efforts in getting it passed unanimously on June 15, 2021.

We are inspired by the work of the AB 3121 California Reparations Task Force and want to offer special acknowledgements to members *Dr. Cheryl Grills, Lisa Holder, and Donald Tamaki* for their outreach and engagement with our city efforts. We are likewise grateful to Chair *Kamilah Moore* for her invitation for the Mayor to provide welcome remarks and for mayoral staff to provide testimony about our efforts to the Task Force.

Deep appreciation is due for reparations leaders and advocates across the country for their work and willingness to dialogue with us along our journey including the organizations and individuals listed here: *African American Redress Network (AARN), Bay Area Regional Health Inequities (BARHI), Coalition for a Just and Equitable California (CJEC), First Repair, National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC), National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N’Cobra), Reparations United, and the Taifa Group.* Individuals include: *Dr. Ron Daniels, Mickey Dean, Tammerlin Drummond, Kamm Howard, Linda Mann, Julianne Malveaux, Dino Robinson, Aziza Robinson-Goodnight, Robin Rue Simmons, Nkechi Taifa, Rob Thomas, Kristi Williams,* and countless others.

Special thanks to local reparations leaders across California for their engagement and being in a community of practice with special appreciation for *Sheryl Davis, Brittnei Chicuata, Areva Martin, Diamond James, Kelsey Lyles, and Melissa Jones.*

We are thankful for the CLRCE grantees who took a chance with us to conduct the first official engagement effort to engage and survey residents of the City of Sacramento and acknowledge them in more detail in section [2.5](#) of this Progress Report.

We are deeply grateful for *Aimée Zenzele Barnes* and *Robert Bell* from the City’s Office of Diversity and Equity for their vital work in developing and shepherding the CLRCE grant opportunity. They have been key thought partners and contributors to this work overall and essential in reviewing both the CLRCE toolkit and this 2024 Progress Report.

We are also grateful for our city colleagues working on related projects such as the CityStart Initiative and the African American Experience Project as well as those who helped guide and offer advice regarding grant work or this report: *Carson Anderson, Sean DeCourcy, Michael Dobson, Marcia Eymann, Henry Feuss, Ari Green, Lynette Hall, Ash Roughani, Ginger Weagraff, and Amy Williamson.*

Finally, the Mayoral Reparations Initiative was led and facilitated by *Kelly Fong Rivas*, author of this report, former Chief of Staff, and outgoing Senior Advisor to Mayor Steinberg.

1.1.3 Author note of gratitude

It has been an honor and heavy privilege to work with everyone involved to help create a community centered and reparative process for a reparations initiative in Sacramento.

I am deeply grateful to Mayor Steinberg for opening the door for our city to talk about municipal reparations and for providing me with the opportunity to work our last few years in office together solely focused on advancing racial equity. It has been the opportunity of a lifetime, and I hope time will show we were able to bend the arc of the city towards a more just and equitable one for all.

My deep gratitude to everyone for your partnership, trust, and support. It is our hope that moving at the speed of trust with community has created a strong foundation for the next mayoral administration and city council to continue advancing on the road to reparations.

1.2 ABOUT THIS REPORT

What this report does not do and is not...

This report does not make explicit recommendations for creating a reparations program. It does not provide recommendations for specific areas of direct repair and has not undergone a full legal analysis. Nor is it the work of a formal reparations task force, committee, or commission.

What this report does do and is...

This 2024 Progress Report is a transparent accounting of the preparatory work undertaken to provide the foundation for the creation of a formal reparations task force, committee, or commission.

It provides a high-level outline and some accountable detail into the work done thus far, so everyone is empowered to engage with, reference, and build upon it as needed. It is designed to provide community, staff, and elected officials with a framework for continuing a reparations initiative with some recommended next steps in [section 2.6.4](#) to be considered by the next mayoral administration and city council.

As mayoral administrations transition at the end of 2024 and the city heads into tough budget deficit decisions in 2025, we hope this report can provide some grounding, insights, and momentum for continuing a reparations initiative.

Navigating this report

For the online version of this 2024 Progress Report, each heading in the Table of Contents is hyperlinked to the corresponding section of the document to help you jump to the sections you want to read. Similarly, the section specific table of contents at the beginning of each section is also hyperlinked. Clicking “*Jump to Table of Contents*” at the bottom of any page will take you back to the beginning.

Using this report

This report taken as a whole provides a comprehensive overview of the mayoral reparations initiative to date and begins to show how to connect the dots between the various components and related efforts to launch a formal citywide initiative. Each section can be explored and referenced independently. A brief summary for each section is provided on the following page.

Brief summary of each section

Note: each of these section titles are also hyperlinked to their corresponding section so you can skip directly to them from this page as needed.

- [Section 1:](#)** Provides an overview of the mayoral reparations initiative while demonstrating how time was spent to build connections, trust, research, and resources for the work.
- [Section 2:](#)** Details the process of creating a community engagement grant, analyzes the resulting qualitative and quantitative data, and outlines recommended next steps.
- [Section 3:](#)** Gives a primer on defining reparations, how it is considered at various levels of government, and the types of approaches other local jurisdictions have taken.
- [Section 4:](#)** Demonstrates how a reparations initiative can draw upon the work of and is connected with other city initiatives and projects.
- [Section 5:](#)** Provides a glossary of terms for terms and concepts that may not be commonly understood or should have a shared definition for understanding their use.
- [Section 6:](#)** The addendum compiles copies of presentations, materials, and reports that were given and used during the reparations initiative into one place.

1.3 STATEMENT FROM MAYOR DARRELL STEINBERG

I wholeheartedly support the reparations movement. If government stands for anything, it should stand for investing in communities and people who have been the victims of discrimination and disenfranchisement for far too long.

Government at all levels throughout history and today, played a key role in the discrimination, disparity, disenfranchisement, and disparagement of our African American community. We as government officials and representatives must take a long overdue and active role in working to acknowledge and fully repair these harms.

We must do so in ways that are not top down. We must do so in ways that empower and recognize the agency and expertise of the very people at the center of these harms so they may lead the way as true partners in the process from start to finish, not the other way around.

What we are doing here in California and throughout cities across the country is just a start because we cannot make up for hundreds of years of discrimination with one city, one state task force, one bill, or one legislative session.

If we use this as a strong beginning to build, to evolve, and adapt as we learn from one another and how to stay together, we will overcome the apathy, pushback, and legal challenges that stand in the way and are sure to come.

I am encouraged to know both mayoral candidates have publicly stated their commitment to continuing to work on reparations at the local level. Both candidates have a strong commitment to it informed by their personal and professional experience and I know they will be able to build upon the work we've done to help our city and community repair the historical harms holding us back from being the City of Trees for all.

I want to express my gratitude for our coalition partners who had some early and tough but very good conversations with me about my "why" for doing this work. I also want to express my appreciation for our CLRCE grantees for their partnership in engaging our community to ensure their voices and experiences were centered in determining the next steps along this reparative journey.

Finally, my heartfelt gratitude for Kelly Fong Rivas and her tireless dedication to this work as she created the first ever Racial Equity Advisor position to the Mayor of Sacramento, carving out the role and resources needed to advance racial equity in culture and policy for our city.

1.4 BACKGROUND ON MAYORAL REPARATIONS INITIATIVE

1.4.1 Important Notes

Some important notes regarding the current pursuit of reparations in the City of Sacramento:

- 1) Not an official City of Sacramento effort: This is a mayoral initiative within a [Council-Manager](#) form of government. This means any city staff or resources beyond the mayor's office must be approved by a majority vote of the City Council. This includes the formation of any formal city task force, committee, or commission, any change to city policies or ordinances, approval of funding within the city budget, and/or any implementation direction to the City Manager.

A majority of the 2022 City Council did pass a midyear budget adjustment recommendation from the mayor to approve \$200,000 for this work.

- 2) Community-Centered: It is important to note that while this is a mayoral initiative, we do not believe the mayor's office should lead the development of a reparations process or proposal, community should be in the lead. We believe the role of the mayor's office is to create and provide the space, resources, and coordination for a community coalition to organize and lead the creation of a formal committee or other body in the actual development of a city level reparations process and proposal.

We firmly believe in order to address and disrupt systemic inequities and patterns, any government effort to repair the harmful impacts of its discriminatory policies and/or actions must be grounded in the understanding and commitment that the decisions made regarding how that repair should be developed and implemented must be led by the communities harmed and impacted, not by the entity responsible.

We recognize and embrace the role the mayor's office has in promoting reparations, in acknowledging harm, in taking formal responsibility, in being a connector to engage experts, in being a convener to bring community together, and in helping to identify and develop resources needed to support the work.

- 3) Transitioning Mayoral Administrations: As of the publishing of this report, there are three months left in Mayor Steinberg's term in office with a new, yet to be determined, Mayor being sworn in on December 10, 2024. When asked directly at a June 29, 2024, CLRCE community forum, both mayoral candidates publicly affirmed their commitment to continuing to work on reparations. This conversation can be seen at the 20:42 minute mark on [this recorded video of the event](#).

1.4 BACKGROUND ON MAYORAL REPARATIONS INITIATIVE

1.4.2 Timeline

The following is a timeline of some key preparatory work undertaken to develop the research and resources needed to support the pursuit of city level/municipal reparations in Sacramento.

- JUN 2021 Sacramento City Council passed a [Ceremonial Resolution](#) in support of California’s [AB-3121](#) – Task Force to Study and Develop Reparations Proposals for African Americans.
- Mayor Steinberg joined a newly formed coalition of mayors dedicated to supporting reparations at the federal level by enacting efforts at the local level: Mayors Organized for Reparations and Equity ([MORE Coalition](#)) and assigned his then Chief of Staff, now Senior Advisor, to lead the effort.
- AUG 2021 An informal working group of community members begins meeting to develop initial research and resources. A public health graduate student intern begins organizing research efforts and an initial framework for a resource guide.
- NOV 2021 Connection made with the CA Reparations Task Force to develop a relationship and to help coordinate information and outreach.
- DEC 2021 Participated in Northeastern University School of Law’s Civil Rights and Restorative Justice ([CRRJ](#)) Project’s Racial Redress and Reparations ([virtual](#)) convening. Sacramento was the only other California entity identified and participating besides the chair of CA’s Reparations Task Force.
- Participated in the first [Evanston Municipal Reparations Symposium](#) for advocates and officials at the local level pursuing reparations. Sacramento was the only California city represented and one of only 40-50 stakeholders across the country to participate.
- Connections made at the Convening and Symposium to other cities, local level advocates, and national organizations created access to a learning network of experts and peers.

- JAN 2022 Connected with UC Davis History Professor Greg P. Downs to pursue a research grant that would support graduate student research in the city's archives and other records.
- FEB 2022 Secured \$200,000 to support the reparations initiative via the Mayor's [recommendation](#) in the City's midyear budget adjustments. \$50,000 of this funding was used for the CLRCE Grant.
- JUN 2022 Research grant secured for two grad student research assistants for 60 hours each over four weeks to support city archive research.
- AUG 2022 Grad students begin archives research focusing on the impacts to the Black community during a period of downtown redevelopment that caused the displacement of businesses and residents in the 1950's – 1970's.
- OCT 2022 Convened first meet up to develop a Sacramento Community Reparations Coalition connecting different organizations and individuals together.
- JAN 2023 Mayoral staff provided witness testimony to the CA Reparations Task Force as part of a panel of local municipal reparations efforts. A video recording of the presentation can be viewed online by scrolling to the [3:00:18 timestamp here](#) and the PowerPoint presentation can be reviewed online [here](#).
- Submitted application for a second research grant to continue funding graduate student research.
- FEB 2023 Second convening of a developing Sacramento Community Reparations Coalition.
- MAR 2023 Mayor Steinberg provides remarks to the CA Reparations Task Force for the first in-person hearings held in Sacramento. The mayor's remarks can be viewed online by scrolling to the [1:20:35 timestamp here](#).
- Secured second grant to continue the UCD graduate student research.
- APR 2023 Third convening of a developing Sacramento Community Reparations Coalition with group consensus to develop an RFP/NOFA process to begin using a portion of the \$200,000 secured in February 2022 for community engagement, education, and outreach regarding a city level reparations initiative. Staff begin the work of developing the grant opportunity and cease meetings to ensure no conflicts of interest.

SEP 2023	NOFA for the CLRCE grant opportunity is posted and shared.
OCT 2023	The five highest scoring applicants are selected for the CLRCE grant.
JAN 2024	CLRCE grant agreements finalized for grant work to begin.
FEB 2024	CLRCE grantees begin monthly cohort meetings to build a community of practice.
APR 2024	Invited by the Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII) to be a panelist for a session called the Public Health Case for Reparations at the 2024 Public Health Law Practitioners Convening.
MAY 2024	Participated as a panelist for BARHII's Reparations Invitational: Government Strategies for Black Health Repair.
JUN 2024	A special Safe Black Space Circle with a focus on reparations is contracted to provide a healing space for grantees, community, and practitioners. A CLRCE community engagement forum hosts the final two mayoral candidates, Dr. Flojaune Cofer and Assemblymember Kevin McCarty and secures their commitment to continue having a Racial Equity Advisor to the Mayor as well as continuing to work on reparations at the local level.
JUL 2024	CLRCE grant term ends and the reparations survey is closed.
AUG 2024	Final research reports from UCD students are received.
SEP 2024	Mayoral Reparations Initiative 2024 Progress Report is published as part of the staff report and oral presentation to the City of Sacramento's Racial Equity Committee on September 10. The Committee provides direction to staff to 1) bring a consent item to full council for approval to use the remaining reparations funds for a professional services agreement with the Greater Sacramento Urban League (GSUL) to continue the community engagement, research, and landscape analysis work, and 2) bring a reparations resolution to the full City Council to turn the mayoral reparations initiative into a city initiative.

2 CITY LEVEL REPARATIONS COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CLRCE) GRANT

Details the process of creating a community engagement grant, analyzes the resulting qualitative and quantitative data, and outlines recommended next steps.

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2.1 OVERVIEW

The idea to create the CLRCE grant developed out of a long process of research and community engagement and was made possible thanks to leadership from Mayor Steinberg to secure the necessary funding.

After researching how other local jurisdictions across the country had approached creating a reparations task force, committee, or commission and learning directly from representatives of those bodies as well as community members in those areas about the impacts and benefits of the various approaches, the clear take aways were:

- center community in the development and decisions
- ask community whether or not they want the city to engage in the work
- create clear and consistent messaging for educational outreach

In February 2022, the Mayor's office secured \$200,000 to support the reparations initiative. In April 2023, the Mayor's office convened the third meeting of a developing Sacramento community reparations coalition to discuss the possibility of using some of that funding for community engagement, education, and outreach regarding a city level reparations initiative. After getting initial feedback and consensus on the desire and general direction to move forward during a coalition meeting discussion, future coalition meetings were postponed indefinitely to avoid any conflicts of interest for participants who may apply for any potential contract or grant that would be developed.

The time it took to develop and begin the work of the CLRCE grant was drawn out by several factors including the form, design, and legality.

Regarding the form, mayoral staff began crafting a scope of work and RFP while consulting with other city staff to determine the best form for the opportunity. These consultations resulted in shifting from a *Request For Proposals (RFP)* design approach for a professional services agreement to a *Notice of Funds Available (NOFA)* for a grant opportunity to provide more flexibility in the design and process.

In terms of design, several factors contributed to a lengthy design process.

- Designing it as a grant helped reduce some barriers for applicants but other barriers arose such as the inability to provide grantees with funding up-front rather than on a reimbursement basis due to city policies.
- While grantees could seek funds for encumbered costs, we were unable to give them funding without an invoice that showed incurred expenses despite extensive

research, interviews with other jurisdictions for advice, and internal conversations with staff to see what could be done differently.

- Designing a grant to specifically reach the Black / African American residents of Sacramento also required some data analysis and legal consultation to ensure we were not violating Proposition 209 or any other city, state, or federal policies.

It is important to note that the development of the grant also took place during a citywide implementation of a new grants management system which caused some slight delays as staff and applicants alike learned how to navigate a new system.

We were finally able to post the [NOFA](#) in September 2023 and used a mixed panel of community members and city staff to determine the highest scoring applicants in October 2023. We were able to select five applicants because the grant amount of \$50,000 could be split into micro-grants of up to \$2,500 or larger grants up to \$10,000. All applicants submitted proposals for the \$10,000 range which allowed for multiple grantees rather than one consultant.

After selecting the grantees, staff worked with each to develop their grant agreements including the Authorized Activities outlined as their scope of work and a Budget Narrative and Table to match the authorized activities. It took several rounds of communication with each grantee to finalize a version that could be given to the city attorney's office for review. After providing the city attorney's office with everything and answering any follow up questions, grant agreements were finalized with grantees in January 2024. After an initial 'meet and greet' meeting for grantees with one another and city staff, virtual CLRCE grantee cohort meetings were held monthly to bond, share progress, assess needs, and to address any issues.

We conducted exit interviews with the grantees to get feedback on their experience with the CLRCE grant and with the city's grant process in general. We offer a few takeaways from those conversations:

- The grants portal was difficult for people to track their inputs and progress
- Having to operate on a reimbursement basis is difficult for small organizations who don't have upfront funding to cover expenses
- Developing a FAQ document for common questions could help staff and applicants find answers more easily.

2.2 GRANT SCOPE OF SERVICES FROM THE NOTICE OF FUNDS AVAILABLE (NOFA)

The objectives for this City Level Reparations Community Engagement Grant are:

1. to inform community members about city, state, and federal level reparations efforts.
2. collect survey information and feedback from community members to help guide the formation of a city level reparations task force, committee, or commission.

We are looking for experienced community organizers, leaders, and/or non-profit organizations to help conduct community engagement, information sessions, and survey collection that prioritizes participation from Sacramento's Black/African American community regarding city-level reparations.

Focus Areas

This NOFA solicits proposals from community-based, non-profit organizations outlining a program of community engagement, information sessions, and survey collection within priority neighborhoods and their surrounding areas, prioritizing Black/African American residents. This funding is one time only. Engagement proposals should aim to center community feedback and include the following:

1. Hold in-person informational sessions (town halls) within priority neighborhoods.
2. Canvass priority neighborhoods with special attention to prioritize Black/African American residents.
3. Attend other community events to conduct outreach and/or tabling.
4. Collect survey responses and feedback (in-person and online) to help determine:
 - (a) How the City should develop a city level reparations task force, committee, or commission.
 - (b) What that task force or commission should focus on in its work.

Priority neighborhoods are defined as those within and surrounding the target population zip codes and include: Meadowview, Valley-Hi, Oak Park, Del Paso, Del Paso Heights, South Natomas.

Target Population

Programs must operate within priority neighborhoods as defined as those within and surrounding the following zip codes: 95815, 95817, 95822, 95823, 95826, 95833, 95834, 95838. Additional priority should be given to Black/African American residents within and around the priority neighborhoods.

Other Administrative Requirements

1. Coordination with the Mayor's office, other grantees, and existing community careholders for events, engagement, and survey collection.
2. Participation in a monthly check-in meeting with the Mayor's office and other grantees.
3. Utilization of a toolkit created by the City which will include basic information/educational tools regarding city, state, and federal level reparations efforts, survey questions, and collection methodology to ensure consistent engagement and results.
4. Provide monthly status update reports and a summary report of engagement efforts and survey data at the end of the program.
5. Organization may not charge program participants for engagement.

You can view the full NOFA on the city's grants portal website [here](#).

2.3 ABOUT THE CLRCE TOOLKIT

This 2024 Progress Report builds upon the CLRCE toolkit which was initially compiled as an introductory resource guide on the subject of reparations by *Deanna Drake*, MPH graduate student researcher for the mayor's office.

The CLRCE toolkit was developed to provide a common framework for the five CLRCE grantees conducting outreach and survey collection to guide a collaborative effort. The purpose of the toolkit was:

- to provide basic information and educational tools regarding local, state, and federal level reparations including context for how a city level reparations program will be different-than and complementary-to reparations programs at the state and/or federal levels.
- to provide the same set of survey questions and collection methodology for all CLRCE grantees to ensure consistent engagement and data collection practices.
- to provide examples of different types of reparations task forces, committees, and commissions that have been formed and could be developed for the City of Sacramento.
- to provide a brief historical context with additional resources to better understand the policies and practices that created and perpetuate inequity in the City of Sacramento.

2.4 COORDINATION AGREEMENTS & CONVENING PRINCIPLES

To help guide the CLRCE grant work across grantees, city staff and in the community, grantees were asked to review the draft coordination agreements convening principles below. During the first grantee cohort monthly meeting these coordination agreements and convening principles were discussed and the group provided feedback, acknowledgement, and confirmation that we would strive to follow them throughout the CLRCE grant term.

Coordination Agreements

- (a) We strive to work in a collaborative partnership with and among community and one another.
- (b) We seek to eliminate communication barriers, including but not limited to values, culture, and/or language.
- (c) We will work to develop and foster an environment of trust and confidence between one another, our community, [careholders](#), and the City.
- (d) We are not in competition with one another and are all working together to engage our community with this unique opportunity.

Convening Principles

- (a) Safe Spaces
We will strive to create spaces and engagement efforts that are culturally sensitive, trauma informed, and community centered that respect people's privacy, agency, and experiences.
- (b) Transparency
As stewards and recipients of taxpayer money, we take transparency seriously and will communicate and provide monthly updates and final reports with this in mind.
- (c) Privacy
As we engage community members to collect surveys and feedback, we will not collect personally identifiable information as part of the process. If an individual chooses to provide their email address to receive updates, we will ensure that information is not used for any other purpose. We understand that email and other correspondence and work products with the City of Sacramento may be subject to the California Public Records Act, and as such may therefore be subject to public disclosure unless otherwise exempt under the Act.

(d) Capacity Building

- i. We recognize that capacity building is a critical aspect of leveling the playing field for careholders and groups to engage effectively in planning and decision-making processes. A lack of awareness and understanding of planning jargon, technical and policy expertise, political dynamics, knowledge of process, and bureaucratic norms can often inhibit the ability of careholders and participating groups to have a meaningful voice.
- ii. We recognize that capacity is a two-way process. While many government agencies have technical capacities and resources to share with careholders, participating groups have capacities that government might lack such as: understanding of cultural norms, credibility with members of marginalized communities, substantive networks, and relationships in the community. Connecting and working with these participating groups and careholders can help build institutional capacity to conduct effective engagement processes.

2.5 SELECTED GRANTEES

After a competitive process, the five highest scoring applications were selected. More information about each organization is below. Together, they worked with the Mayor's office and the Office of Diversity and Equity to conduct Sacramento's first ever city level reparations community engagement effort.

We are deeply grateful for their participation and hard work throughout the grant term. We learned a lot together and each organization participating brought valuable insights, experience, and networks into the work.

[California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies \(CBHA\)](#)

Represented by: Courtnie Thomas and Zoe Guttman



The California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies (CBHA) is a statewide association that provides support, expertise, and legislative advocacy to empower its diverse, community-based member agencies who provide mental health and substance use services to over 1 million of California's Medi-Cal recipients. CBHA member organizations are all community-based organizations and serve some of the most vulnerable individuals across the state, particularly in disadvantaged and underserved communities, and both the internal CBHA staff and CBHA member organizations are representative of the communities they serve. Specifically, CBHA staff represent multiple racial and ethnic groups and forty percent of the Executives of CBHA member agencies identify as Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC).

CBHA's activities and priorities mirror the goals of Sacramento City's Reparations Community Engagement Grant. In line with the goals of the Reparations Community Engagement Grant, CBHA prioritizes community engagement and input and is regularly sought out by state leaders, allied organizations, and community groups to provide and glean information from diverse and historically disenfranchised communities. CBHA has expertise conducting information sessions and listening circles, in addition to collecting surveys and feedback directly from community members. To achieve the objectives of the Reparations Community Engagement Grant, CBHA is strategically placed to both inform community members about reparations efforts and collect survey information and feedback to help guide efforts. In fact, CBHA followed the California Reparations Taskforce closely, writing a letter acknowledging the formation of the taskforce and offering CBHA support and assistance wherever it could be.

CBHA proposes the Community Awareness and Response to Reparations Efforts in Sacramento (CARES) program, aimed to: (1) promote awareness to Black/African American communities about California’s Reparations projects through advertisement, word of mouth, and utilizing cultural informants; and (2) collect feedback from Black/African American residents about their experiences and their recommendations for developing a city reparations task force/committee via surveys and virtual/in-person neighborhood town hall meetings.

[Coalition for a Just and Equitable California \(CJEC\)](#)

Represented by Chris Lodgson



Founded formally in 2021, the Coalition for a Just and Equitable California (CJEC) is the state’s first, only and leading grassroots association working to achieve Reparations and Reparative Justice for Black/African American descendants of persons enslaved in the U.S. (American Freedmen). We are an unincorporated non-profit association and coalition of local organizations and associations working in the Sacramento, Bay Area, Inland Empire and Los Angeles regions. We are an all-volunteer association with volunteer officers and staff across the state of California. Our lead organizers are based in

Sacramento along with our Sacramento coalition partner, the Sacramento American Redress Coalition of California. Implementation and execution of all projects associated with this particular grant will be led by members of our Sacramento team, with administrative and technical support from our state-wide coalition (CJEC) and our fiscal sponsor, the California Black Women’s Health Project (CABWHP). We intend to dedicate between 10 and 15 core volunteers in Sacramento to the execution of projects and plans related to this effort. We also intend to recruit additional volunteer support from local community members in the target zip codes. Projects and plans related to this effort will also benefit from the direct support of volunteers with CJEC’s Community Organizing and Mobilizing team.

Beginning in 2019, members of our Sacramento, Bay Area, and Southern California teams began engaging and organizing local residents and elected officials on the topic of Reparations. In 2020, our association, working with (then) Assemblymember Dr. Shirley Weber, helped write and enact the final version of the law that created the California Reparations Task Force (AB-3121). In 2021, the city of Sacramento recognized our work for Reparations via a resolution we authored that was unanimously supported by members of the Sacramento City Council and Mayor. Also in 2021, as California’s Reparations Task Force began its work, our teams presented a community-driven engagement plan with recommendations for how the state Task Force might go about enlisting the support and

participation of community members throughout the development of its Reparations recommendations. In 2022, because of continuing grassroots organizing and community engagement for Reparations, the California Reparations Task Force selected us as an official ‘Anchor Organization’, responsible for conducting community engagement, community information sessions, community listening sessions, and data collection from Black/African American Californians on the topic of Reparations.

As part of this effort, our activities included (and continue to include) in person town halls and community meetings, canvassing at community events and within neighborhoods and areas frequented by target populations, attending community events for the purposes of outreach, partnering with local organizations and credible community messengers/care-holders to reach/engage target populations, and survey/data collection and analysis. As it concerns survey/data collection and analysis, in addition to required reporting, the results of our work in this effort were captured and published by the Ralph J. Bunche Center at UCLA and are available for public view on the UCLA’s website, as well as within the final report of the California Reparations Task Force.

[Earth Mama Healing Network](#)

Represented by RoLanda Wilkins and Khadijah Wilkins



Earth Mama Healing Network (EMHN) Inc., is a 501(C)(3) community organization founded in 2011 in Sacramento with a focus on growth and empowerment of African American (AA/Black) female youth, and the AA/Black community, serving the Sacramento, Elk Grove, and Folsom/Cordova areas. EMHN was established by a group of seven women between the ages 18 to 62, with the mission to create emotionally strong, spiritually connected, and socially smart girls and women.

EMHN’s mission is to activate and connect school, community, and institutional partnerships that leverage and expound upon our shared capacity to positively change youth lives, family structures and systems within Sacramento County and the State of California.

EMHN provides an array of services and programs, such as internships, mentoring, youth led conferences, an annual historical road trip, college readiness, social justice, substance use prevention, social services, mentoring, case management/wraparound services, mental health, family engagement, workforce development, Podcasts and Social Media campaigns, other resources and activities for youth and the AA/Black community. In addition, EMHN hosts annual celebrations that honor the legacy and rich culture of the AA/Black Community and experience. EMHN is committed to fostering inclusivity, addressing historical injustices, and ensuring equitable representation within our city.

Sheba Farms Foundation

Represented by Zion Tadesse



Our organization, Sheba Farms Foundation, was established in 2020 and has a strong track record of engaging with underserved communities, including the Black/African American population, on issues related to social justice, food justice, environmental justice, economic justice, equity, and community development. We have 10 employees, and for this program, we will allocate 5 employees who are well-versed in community organizing, data collection, and program management.

Sheba Farms' mission is to establish and participate in a global network of farmers on both domestic and international levels with a goal of transforming agriculture while securing sustainable food supplies and creating improved trade relations between Ethiopia and the United States that will also contribute to the people of Africa through increasing education, technology, and a cross-cultural exchange of information. Profits from Sheba Organizations will support the Purpose, Vision, and Mission of the Sheba Farms Foundation.



The Stephens Foundation

Represented by Kim Stephens, Desirae Fox, and Andrea Barber

We are a non-profit organization of experienced community organizers and leaders whose strategy focuses on prioritizing Black/African American residents within priority neighborhoods and their surrounding areas. With over 20 years of dedicated service working with at-risk youth and families, we possess a deep understanding of the obstacles and barriers that individuals and families face in accessing critical resources.

Kim Stephens is an exemplary community leader whose life journey has been marked by a deep commitment to giving back to the community in which she lives, works, and plays. As a single parent, she faced significant challenges when she moved to Sacramento with her five children in search of a fresh start. At that time, she had no job, no home, and limited resources. However, Kim's determination and resilience shone through as she dedicated countless hours to volunteering at schools and actively participating in community programs. Through her unwavering efforts, Kim not only transformed her own life but also uplifted her children, who have since become college graduates and community activists themselves.

In 2018, Kim, along with her family, established The Stephens Foundation (TSF) as a response to the pressing need for community support. TSF has since become a formidable force for positive change in Sacramento. They have forged partnerships with established community organizations, working collaboratively to provide essential services to the community. One of TSF's primary focuses has been on workforce training, helping individuals gain valuable skills and access employment opportunities. Simultaneously, they have been instrumental in guiding individuals to vital resources, ensuring that wraparound services are available to those in need. As an organization, TSF continues to make a profound impact on the community they serve. They are a beacon of hope and opportunity for individuals facing adversity, much like Kim herself once did. TSF's dedication to empowering the community is evident not only in their mission but also in the tangible results they achieve.

Established in 2018, The Stephens Foundation has grown in its scope and reach, demonstrating their commitment to improving the lives of Sacramento residents. Their team comprises dedicated individuals who work tirelessly to fulfill the organization's mission. Kim Stephens' story serves as an inspiration to us all, illustrating the transformative power of community engagement and the potential for positive change when individuals and organizations come together to uplift those in need.

2.6 SURVEY SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

2.6.1 Overview of survey

The CLRCE survey was conducted by CLRCE grantees from February 2024 through July 2024 and received a total of 510 responses. While the online version of the survey is closed and no longer accepting responses, the printable versions of the resident and non-resident surveys are provided as a reference in this section.

Survey Design

The design of the CLRCE grant survey was compiled using research, lessons, and direct feedback from community members. The survey was designed to assess:

- How familiar people are with the concept of reparations and how they define it.
- How likely people feel reparations are to happen at various levels of government.
- What areas under city control would people like to see a reparations program focus on.
- Whether or not people want the city to pursue reparations.
- Demographic data (optional)

Accessibility

- The survey was designed to be conducted in person using a printed version or online using a google form. A link and QR code were provided in the CLRCE toolkit and CLRCE grantees created a webpage to provide more information and direct people to the survey.
- The survey was not translated into other languages.

Data Collection

- All grantees utilized the provided surveys and the same set of questions provided in the toolkit to ensure consistency in measuring results.
- While surveys were collected anonymously online and did not require identifying information in person to be completed, grantees were encouraged to do their best to avoid collecting more than one survey from any individual.
- There was an option for individuals completing the survey to provide an email address to be added to an email list if they would like to stay engaged with future updates regarding city level reparations from the mayor's office.

Emails were not required, and any email addresses collected on a survey may not be used by the City of Sacramento or grantee organizations for any other purpose than stated.

- The demographic information was optional and was not required to complete the survey but was asked to help better understand community sentiments.

- There were two versions of the survey:
 - o One for residents of Sacramento.

- o One for people who do not reside in Sacramento.

We created this version because we recognize the online version of the survey may be shared beyond Sacramento and/or may receive responses from individuals living in neighboring cities or the County of Sacramento. We created printable versions of both surveys to used as needed.

2.6 SURVEY SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

2.6.2 *Reference: printable versions of survey*

The following pages are condensed samples of the two printable versions of the survey provided in the CLRCE toolkit (resident and non-resident). The printable versions are color coded to make it easy to tell them apart when printed. The resident version is purple, and the non-resident version is yellow.

This QR code was created for the online version of the survey*:

**Sacramento
City Level Reparations
Community Engagement Survey**



***NOTE: the survey closed July 31, 2024, and is no longer accepting responses**

City Level Reparations Community Engagement SURVEY

for Sacramento residents

What neighborhood do you call home?

What neighborhood(s) do you work in/out of?

A) How familiar are you with the concept of reparations?

1 2 3 4 5
(not very familiar) (very familiar)

B) How do you define reparations?

C) Reparations may occur at the federal level, state level, and/or local level. Please select which answer most closely aligns with your thoughts on the subject.

**select only one option*

- ☐ Reparations should happen ONLY at the FEDERAL level of government
- ☐ Reparations should happen ONLY at the STATE level of government
- ☐ Reparations should happen at the FEDERAL & STATE levels of government
- ☐ Reparations should happen at EVERY LEVEL of government
- ☐ Reparations should happen ONLY at the LOCAL level of government
- ☐ UNSURE, need to learn more

D) How likely do you think reparations are to happen at the FEDERAL level of government?

1 2 3 4 5
(not very) (very)

D2) How likely do you think reparations are to happen at the STATE level of government?

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
(not very) (very)

D3) How likely do you think reparations are to happen at the LOCAL level of government?

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
(not very) (very)

E1) How comfortable are you with the idea of the City of Sacramento developing a commission or task force to study and develop reparations?

1 2 3 4 5
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
(not very) (very)

E2) Please let us know why you feel that way...

F) For the next question, please keep in mind...

City level or local reparations are more tailored to the specific injustices that occurred within that city and are (or were) within the city's realm of control. Reparations at a city level can address local incidents of discrimination, such as exclusionary zoning, police brutality, or specific historical events.

F1) If the City of Sacramento were to develop a reparations commission or task force, what topic areas do you think it should focus on?
All of these can be explored, please select which ones are most important to you.

- ☐ City land use and zoning decisions, practices, and policies (example: exclusionary zoning)
- ☐ Redevelopment projects, especially those that utilized eminent domain (example: freeway developments)
- ☐ Infrastructure investments and disparity (example: street and park maintenance)
- ☐ Employment (example: disparity in hiring or promotions)
- ☐ Public safety (example: policing practices)
- ☐ Other...

F2) If other, please add your comments here.

G1) Should Sacramento pursue reparations at the local level?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

G2) Why or why not?

Any additional comments about this survey or the topic of reparations?

**The following questions are OPTIONAL
and for informational purposes only.**

OPTIONAL: Email list sign-up

If you want to receive updates about the city level reparations initiative from the Sacramento Mayor's office, please provide your email address.

EMAIL address: _____

What is your race or ethnic identity? Select all that apply. (Optional)

- ☐ Asian – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including for example Cambodia, China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- ☐ Black or African American (not of Hispanic origin) - A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa or the Caribbean.
- ☐ Filipino (not of Hispanic origin) - All persons having origins from the Philippine Islands.
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino/Latinx - A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- ☐ Native American or Alaska Native (not of Hispanic origin) - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North or South America (including Central America), and who maintains a tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander – A person having origins in any of the peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- ☐ SWANA/WANA – Southwest Asia or North Africa – All persons having origins in any of the people of Southwest Asia or North Africa.
- ☐ White (not of Hispanic origin) - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe.
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ OTHER: _____

<p>Should Sacramento pursue reparations at the local level?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p>How likely do you think reparations are to happen at any level of government?</p> <p>(not very) <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5 (very)</p>	<p>How likely are you to support a reparations program at any level of government?</p> <p>(not likely) <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5 (very likely)</p>	<p>Any additional comments about this survey or the topic of reparations?</p>
<p>The following questions are OPTIONAL and for informational purposes only.</p>			
<p>OPTIONAL: Email list sign-up If you want to receive updates about the city level reparations initiative from the Sacramento Mayor's office, please provide your email address.</p>			
<p>EMAIL address: _____</p>			
<p>What is your race or ethnic identity? select all that apply. (Optional)</p>			
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Asian – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast, Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including for example Cambodia, China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Thailand, and Vietnam.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American (not of Hispanic origin) - A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa or the Caribbean.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Filipino (not of Hispanic origin) - All person having origins from the Philippine Islands.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino/Latinx - A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Native American or Alaska Native (not of Hispanic origin) - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North or South America (including Central America), and who maintains a tribal affiliation or community attachment.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander – A person having origins in any of the peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> SWANA/WANA – Southwest Asia or North Africa – All persons having origins in any of the people of Southwest Asia or North Africa.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> White (not of Hispanic origin) - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: _____</p>			

If you selected "Black or African American", do you identify as a descendant of persons who were enslaved in the United States? (Optional)

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure

What is your age? (Optional)

☐ 15 years or younger
☐ 16 – 24 years old
☐ 25 – 34 years old
☐ 45 – 44 years old
☐ 45 – 54 years old
☐ 55 – 64 years old
☐ 65 – 75 years old
☐ 75 years or older

How do you describe your gender? (Optional)

How did you hear about this survey? (Optional)

☐ Friend or family
☐ From an organization
☐ At a community event
☐ News
☐ Other _____

This portion to be completed by the organization conducting the survey.

Organization Name	Location collected	Date collected

If you selected "Black or African American", do you identify as a descendant of persons who were enslaved in the United States? (Optional)

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure

What is your age? (Optional)

☐ 15 years or younger
☐ 16 – 24 years old
☐ 25 – 34 years old
☐ 45 – 44 years old
☐ 45 – 54 years old
☐ 55 – 64 years old
☐ 65 – 75 years old
☐ 75 years or older

How did you describe your gender? (Optional)

How did you hear about this survey? (Optional)

☐ Friend or family
☐ From an organization
☐ At a community event
☐ News
☐ Other _____

This portion to be completed by the organization conducting the survey.

Organization Name	Location collected	Date collected

2.6 SURVEY SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

2.6.3 Summary and analysis of findings

Key Takeaways

The survey received **510 completed responses** from residents and non-residents. Responses demonstrate overall that while most people don't think reparations are likely to happen at any level of government, **80% want the City of Sacramento to pursue it.**

The survey's demographic goal to reach Black / African American city residents was achieved with 80% of total survey respondents identifying as Black / African American and 65% of responses coming from city residents.

Reviewing the data

The survey questions were designed to collect quantitative(*N*) and qualitative(*L*) data with some (*N*) specific questions also asking a follow-up (*L*) question. Quantitative data helps us understand specific measurements while qualitative data is interpretation-based to evaluate sentiments.

The outline of the survey questions below serves as a guide for the type of data collected and the following pages provide snapshots of the data, commentary on what the snapshots reveal, a deeper assessment of qualitative data received, and an overview of the optional demographic data collected at the end of the survey.

- A. (*N*) assess people's familiarity with the concept of reparations
- B. (*L*) assess how people define reparations
- C. (*N*) measure sentiments regarding where people think reparations should happen
- D. (*N*) measure sentiments regarding likelihood of reparations occurring at the (1) Federal (2) State, and (3) Local levels of government.
- E. (*N/L*) measures sentiments regarding comfort levels with the city pursuing reparations
- F. (*N/L*) assesses what a city reparations initiative should focus on
- G. (*N/L*) assess whether or not people want the City of Sacramento to pursue reparations

RESIDENT SURVEY ANALYSIS

Of the 510 responses received, 442 indicated they lived within city limits while 68 said they did not. Self-identified non-city residents were directed to a shorter version of the survey and are not included in this analysis.

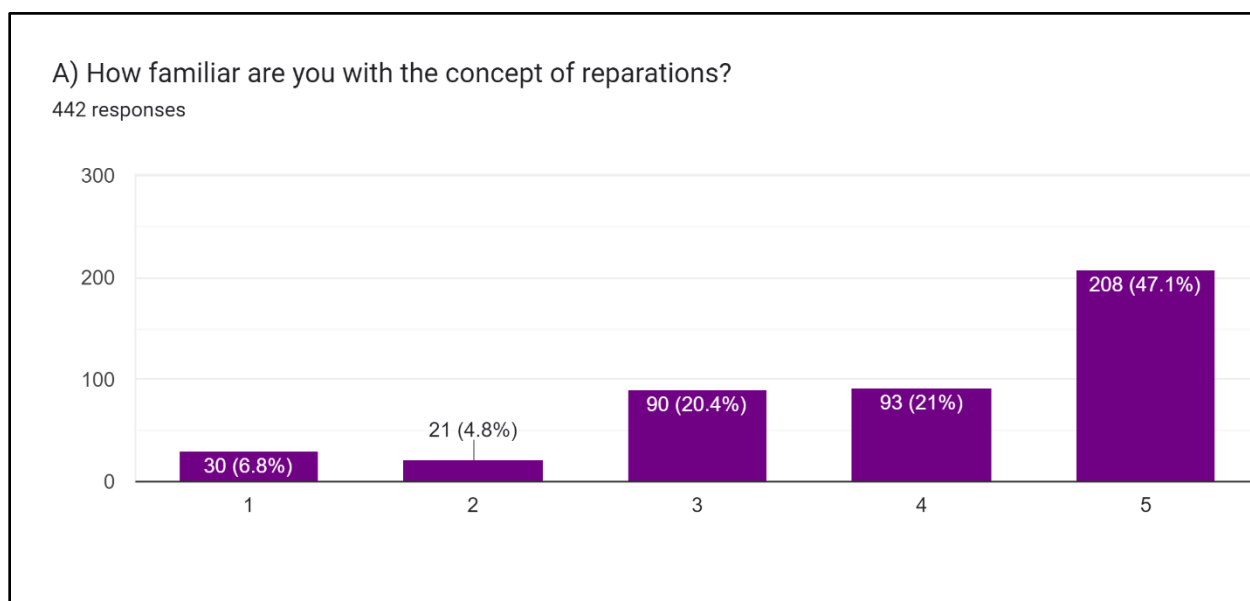
After seeking help from the city's Geographic Information System (GIS) team to help validate the location data provided, the number of actual city residents landed at 331, or 65% of total surveys received with a total of 179 non-city resident responses (35%).

However, due to limited staff capacity to sort and analyze the data in time for the presentation of this 2024 Progress Report to the Sep. 10 meeting of the Racial Equity Committee, unless specified, this section provides an analysis of the 442 self-identified city resident responses received rather than a breakdown of the 331 validated city resident responses in comparison to the 179 non-city resident responses.

A. How familiar are you with the concept of reparations?

The 1-5 rating represents a scale from (1) being not very familiar to (5) being very familiar.

- 68.1% of respondents indicated they were familiar or very familiar.
- 11.6% of respondents indicated they were either less familiar or not very familiar.



B. How do you define reparations?

This open-ended question produced a wide range of answers that are summarized into six common themes: (1) Direct Compensation; (2) Restitution; (3) Atonement & Healing; (4) Investment in Communities; (5) Recognition & Justice; and (6) Equal Access & Opportunity.

These six themes provide a comprehensive understanding of how respondents view and think about reparations, highlighting the various facets they believe are necessary to effectively deliver reparations.

Five sample quotes are provided for each theme and a word cloud was developed to show the most commonly used words from all responses.



Six Themes

(1) Direct Compensation

Encompasses direct monetary payments to individuals or communities affected by historical injustices and includes multiple references to the historical promise of Special Field Orders No.15 (1865) more commonly known today as “40 acres and a mule”.

- "Direct targeted tangible timely monetary resources."
- "Direct compensation."
- "Housing, money, no taxes."
- "Being paid or compensated for what you are owed."
- "Receiving money because it is owed because of mistreatment."

(2) Restitution

Includes broader sentiments to make amends for past wrongs including more specific suggestions to repair harm done, including financial compensation.

- "Restoring what was or should be entitled to a group that was not given their due rights, opportunities, or entitlement."
- "Repairing or trying to make right the deliberate actions that caused harm."
- "The making of amends for a wrong one has done, by paying money to or otherwise helping those who have been wronged."
- "Making amends financially or other life-sustaining means."
- "Repayment for the economic destruction of the Black community."

(3) Atonement and Healing

Focuses on apologies, symbolic gestures, and efforts towards healing and accountability, reflecting a belief that reparations should include both acknowledgment and tangible efforts to address past wrongs.

- "Making amends for the wrong that has been done."
- "Healing and Accountability."
- "I define reparations as start with a national apology. Level the playing field. Equality on every level."
- "Process of repairing, healing and restoring a people injured because of their group identity and in violation of their fundamental human rights by government, corporations, institutions and families."
- "healing communities that have been impacted by any type of oppression."

(4) Investment in Communities

Emphasizes investing in affected communities through funding for infrastructure, healthcare, education, and other community programs as a form of reparations.

- "Investment in the community to address systemic inequalities."
- "Funding for educational and community programs to uplift those affected by historical injustices."
- "Power to determine the destiny of my black community."
- "How i define Reparation is change bad things or unfair things in my community."
- "Repairing and replenishing and investing and giving back."

(5) Recognition and Justice

Involves acknowledging historical injustices and making efforts to address systemic discrimination through symbolic recognition and concrete actions to promote justice.

- "Acknowledgment of past wrongs and efforts to rectify them."
- "Recognition of historical injustices and steps to ensure they are addressed."
- "Trying to make amends of wrong doing. History is full of wrong actions and reparations now would be figuring out how to repair the wrongs of the past."
- "Making inequitable conditions targeting black people as right as possible."
- "Acknowledgements of current and past nation building efforts made by slaves and their descendants, and awarding them the proper returns for their investments."

(6) Equal Access and Opportunity

Centers on ensuring fair access to opportunities and resources for affected communities, aiming to address long-term impacts of systemic discrimination.

- "Equal access, opportunity, and repay for generations of systemic oppression."
- "The ability to build and have equitable sustained opportunities that continue for generations."
- "Our fair share of the American dream."
- "Ensuring that those affected by historical injustices have the same opportunities and access to resources."
- "Closing of the economic gap which has come through deliberate policies which historically allowed for discriminatory practices to continue; in housing, jobs, economics, education and health care."

Additionally, to show how these six themes line up with the five forms of reparations as defined by the United Nations framework which sets the common international standards, outlined in section [3.1](#), a comparison table is provided on the next page.

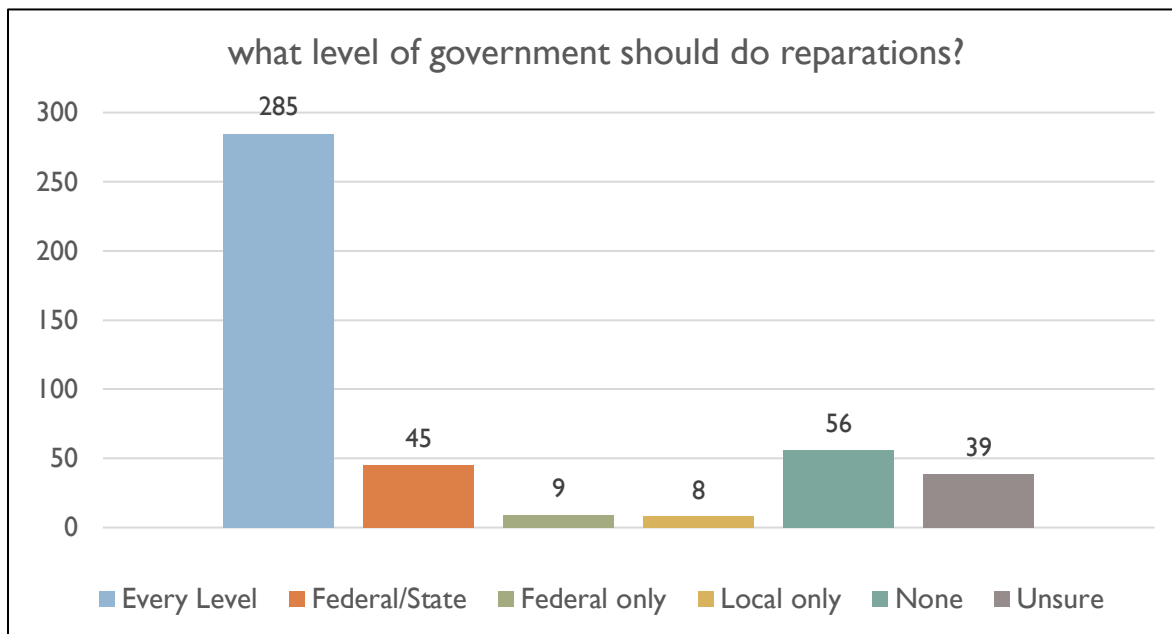
Comparison Table

This comparison table demonstrates how the aggregated survey responses align closely with the United Nations' framework for reparations and reflects the quantitative data from the first question **(A.)** that showed 68% of respondents indicated they were familiar or very familiar with the concept of reparations.

Reference: The United Nations (U.N.) framework identifies the five forms as: restitution (A), compensation (B), rehabilitation (C), satisfaction (D) & guarantees of non-repetition (E). More detail about the U.N. framework can be found in section [3.1](#).

Survey Themes	U.N. Framework	Explanation
(1) Direct Compensation	Compensation (B)	Reflects the UN's definition of compensation involving monetary payments for economically assessable damage.
(2) Restitution	Restitution (A)	Aligns with the UN's restitution, aiming to restore the victim to their original situation before the violations.
(3) Atonement and Healing	Satisfaction (D) and Rehabilitation (C)	Captures satisfaction and rehabilitation, including apologies, acknowledgment, and measures for medical and psychological care.
(4) Investment in Communities	Rehabilitation (C) and Satisfaction (D)	Aligns with broader rehabilitation and satisfaction, focusing on community investments for sustainable development and systemic issue resolution.
(5) Recognition and Justice	Satisfaction (D) and Guarantees of Non-Repetition (E)	Mirrors satisfaction and non-repetition measures, including public acknowledgment and legal/institutional reforms to prevent recurrence.
(6) Equal Access and Opportunity	Guarantees of Non-Repetition (E)	Aligns with guarantees of non-repetition, promoting non-discrimination and equal opportunities through systemic changes and reforms.

C. Reparations may occur at the federal level, state level, and/or local level. Please select which answer most closely aligns with your thoughts on the subject.



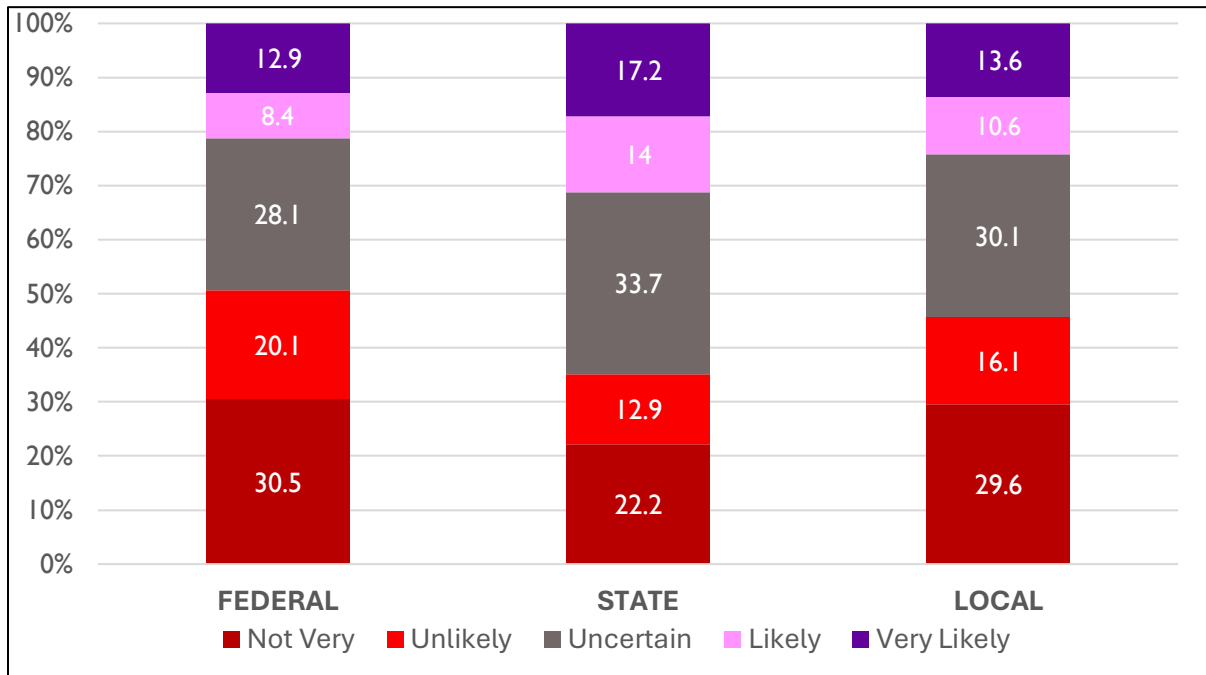
The majority of respondents (64.5%) indicated reparations should occur at all levels of government with only 12.7% of people saying it should not happen at any level of government and 8.8% saying they were “unsure” and need to learn more.

D1-3. How likely do you think reparations are to happen at each level of government?

Questions D1-D3 ask how likely respondents think reparations are to happen at each level of government. When we compare the data from the previous question (C.) to the responses given for questions D1-D3, it becomes clear that despite a strong desire for reparations to occur at all levels (64.5%), there is not much confidence that reparations will happen at any level of government.

The data collected on the next page demonstrates people do not feel confident about reparations happening at any level of government with some variation in confidence between the three levels of government.

D1-3. How likely do you think reparations are to happen at each level of government?



FEDERAL

51% of respondents said it was unlikely to very unlikely for reparations to occur at the FEDERAL level with 31% expressing strong negative sentiments. Only 21% of people felt reparations were likely or very likely to happen at the FEDERAL level of government while 28% expressed a neutral or uncertain position.

STATE

35% of respondents said it was unlikely to very unlikely for reparations to occur at the STATE level with 22% expressing strong negative sentiments. Only 31% of people felt reparations were likely or very likely to happen at the STATE level of government while 34% expressed a neutral or uncertain position.

LOCAL

46% of respondents said it was unlikely to very unlikely for reparations to occur at the LOCAL level with 30% expressing strong negative sentiments. Only 24% of people felt reparations were likely or very likely to happen at the LOCAL level of government while 30% expressed a neutral or uncertain position.

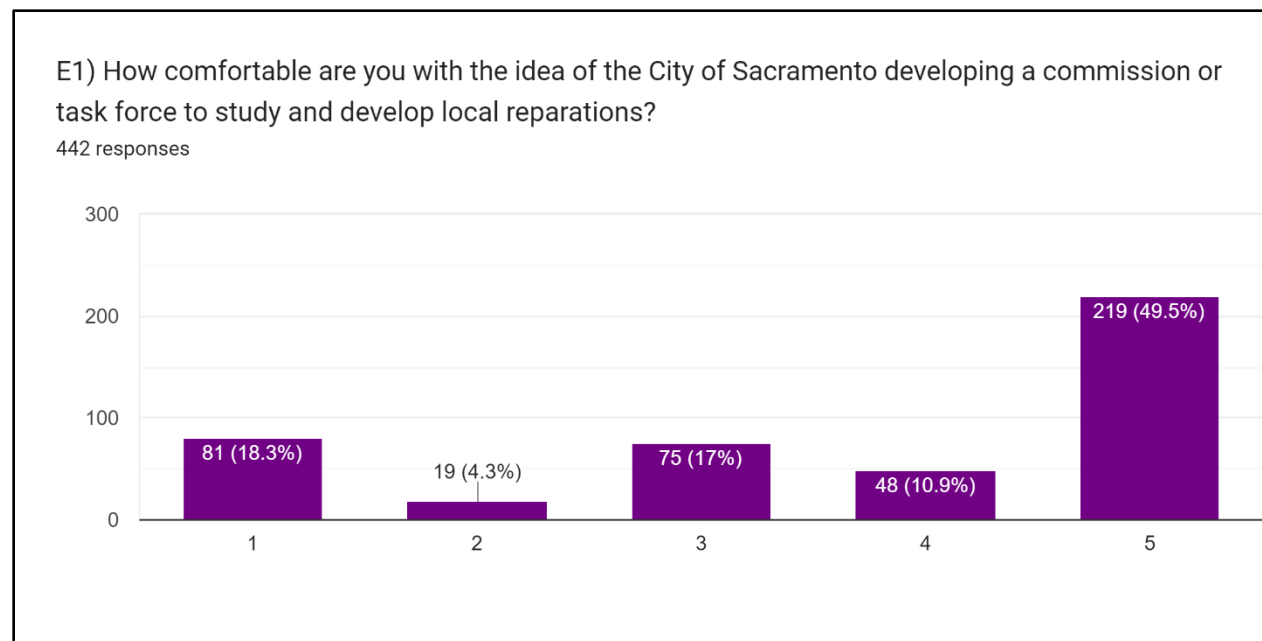
The sentiments seem to reflect the amount of engagement residents have seen and felt from each level of government regarding reparations.

The work of the AB 3121 California Reparations Task Force may make people feel more confident in state level actions than they do for local or federal. Similarly, the engagement work of the mayoral reparations initiative may have increased confidence levels that local government will take action before the federal government does but this could also be attributed to the longstanding effort to get H.R. 40 passed at the federal level to no avail.

E1. How comfortable are you with the idea of the City of Sacramento developing a commission or task force to study and develop local reparations?

The 1-5 rating represents a scale from (1) not very comfortable to (5) very comfortable.

- 60% of respondents indicated they were comfortable or very comfortable.
- 23% of respondents indicated they were less comfortable or very uncomfortable.



E2. Please let us know why you feel that way (optional)

380 people or 86% of respondents expanded upon their answer in (E1.) The following is a proportionately representative sample of responses for the sentiments expressed with the rating prefacing the quoted response.

17% Responded “neutrally” with a (3):

- (3) “Reparations at any level of government is a step in the right direction.”
- (3) “I need more info.”
- (3) “It is a great idea but you just never know which people they are going to put in a commission or task force that are genuinely going to help the people.”

60% Felt comfortable or very comfortable:

- (4) “I feel it is a worthy cause, however there are so many people who will dismantle the efforts of the task force because they feel that we don't deserve reparations and they won't benefit from it.”
- (4) “I believe with the right panel a discussion can be productive.”
- (5) “I feel reparations are very necessary and starting at the city level is a great idea.”
- (5) “It needs to be done so folks are held accountable.”
- (5) “I feel that it is very important and unfortunately very late but reparations is something that needs to happen.”
- (5) “Examining problems with the goal of implementing solutions is always a good thing.”
- (5) “It is past time for compensation to put our family and future in a better position to live and thrive.”
- (5) “I have little hope in the federal government due to the meddling of the previous administration, but I would be interested in hearing and seeing the outcomes to a local level study as they had/have jurisdiction on the local level.”

23% Felt less comfortable or very uncomfortable:

- (2) I feel like developing a commission to study local reparations is a great idea, I, however, am very familiar with developing something and it not getting done or it turns into something else altogether.
- (1) “Don’t trust the city of Sacramento to do the right thing.”
- (1) “I believe these dollars could be better spent on educating our community on financial literacy.”
- (1) “Because the very concept of reparations denies the Constitutional right for all citizens to be treated equally before the law.”

For this next question in the survey, people were asked to please keep the following information in mind: *City level or local reparations are more tailored to the specific injustices that occurred within that city and are (or were) within the city's realm of control. Reparations at a city level can address local incidents of discrimination, such as exclusionary zoning, police brutality, or specific historical events. All of these areas can be explored, please select which ones are most important to you.*

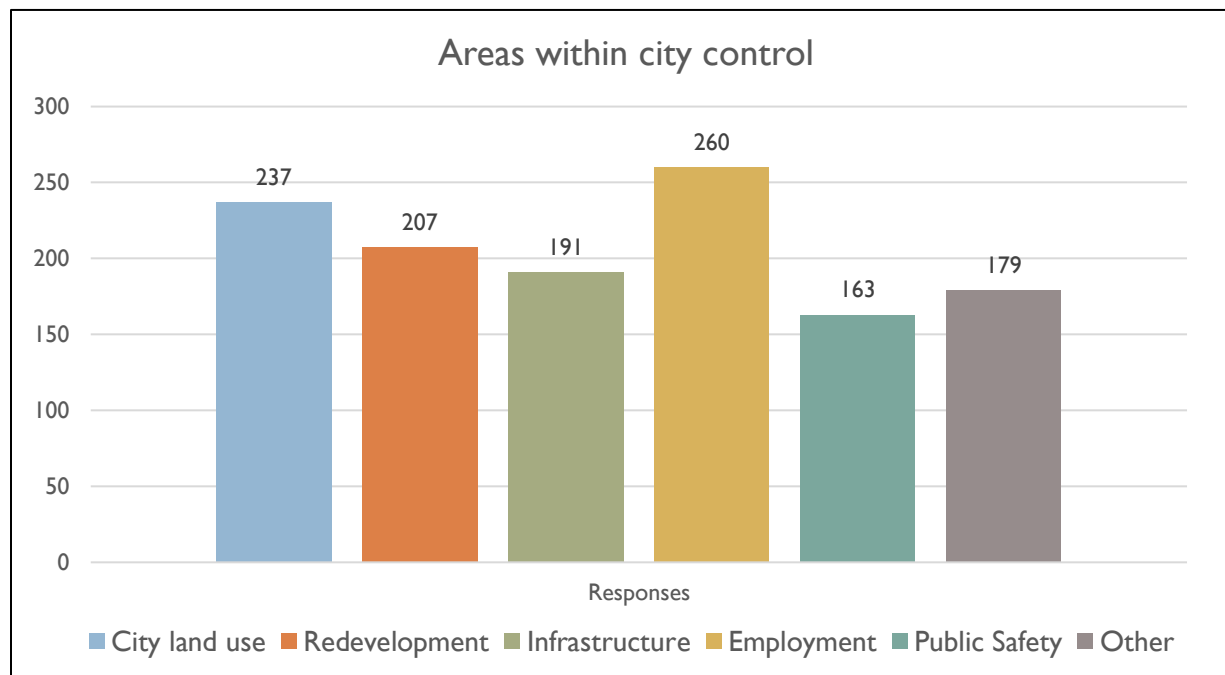
F. If the City of Sacramento were to develop a reparations commission or task force, what topic areas do you think it should focus on?

This question allowed respondents to select multiple answers as well as an “other” to provide more detail or different suggestions. The five multiple choice options were:

1. City land use and zoning decisions, practices, and policies (example: exclusionary zoning)
2. Redevelopment projects, especially those that utilized eminent domain (example: freeway developments)
3. Infrastructure investments and disparity (example: street and park maintenance)
4. Employment (example: disparity in hiring or promotions)
5. Public safety (example: policing practices)

The chart in figure 1 shows the total number of times each category was selected.

Figure 1



“Other” category

An evaluation of the answers given under the “other” category revealed a range of responses and included commentary on why certain selections were made.

ALL THE ABOVE: 20% of responses indicated a preference for addressing all issues or taking a comprehensive approach.

HOUSING: Housing was expressed as the most common suggestion with 15% of responses mentioning comments related to affordable housing, homeownership, or rent.

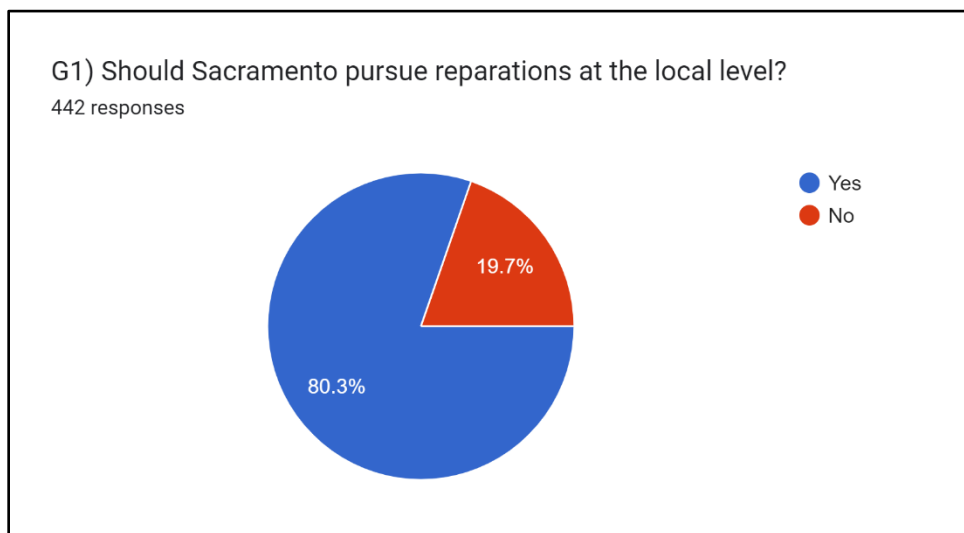
EDUCATION: The next most common suggestion named education as a priority with 10% of comments related to access, quality, and supports for K-12 and college.

NONE: The analysis also revealed 28% of responses listed under “other” expressed a negative sentiment towards reparations and can be summarized as being against doing anything.

The rest of the responses included comments about: direct economic investment, job training, tax breaks and exemptions, and mental health supports.

G) Should Sacramento pursue reparations at the local level?

80% of respondents support the City pursuing a reparations initiative. The responses vary from an “all levels of government” approach to city specific actions and areas of control.



The following examples of what respondents shared when asked to share “*why or why not*” are grouped into four general themes: (1) all levels of government; (2) city specific; (3) moral arguments; (4) against.

(1) All levels of government

- “All levels should be pursued.”
- “Reparations should be pursued at every level.”
- “Every level of government has had their hand in creating policies, making decisions or taking a blind eye to policies/laws/decisions that disproportionately affect African Americans, their neighborhoods, and their livelihoods.”
- “Reparations are due at every level where desperate conditions existed due to inequities.”

(2) City specific

- “At the local level is where we can make intentional changes to benefit the community locally.”
- “Infrastructure inequalities and police reform are two areas where real change is possible.”
- “It would be great for Sacramento to stand out as an example of how a City can provide reparations for past history. As California’s Capitol, be the example for the state.”
- “Sacramento has Black communities that are suffering from poverty, homelessness and lack of opportunities to correct these issues.”
- “I think so because if we were to do local we could key into what needs to be done in each neighborhood instead of the whole state which would be hard to do. Keeping it local you’ll know which area needs more help and what kind of help at that.”
- “Because they can make things happen at a much quicker pace then other branches of government.”

(3) Moral argument

- “It's the right thing to do.”
- “Righteously leading by example.”
- “Reparations are needed to acknowledge and atone for historical and current racist practices.”
- “Help the undeserved.”

(4) Against

- “It's not a local issue and will muddy up water that's already cloudy.”
- “Best handled at the state and or federal levels.”
- “It's ridiculous.”
- “Once again, it is unethical to ask that taxpayers who never committed an injustice be asked to take financial responsibility in paying for something they never did, to those who never were victims of the injustice.”

Optional demographic data analysis

Respondents had the option to share demographic data at the end of the survey to help us understand who was taking the survey. The data below is averaged from the 510 total response rate since both city and non-city residents used the same optional demographic portion of the survey. All responses were self-selections and all survey responses were entered anonymously.

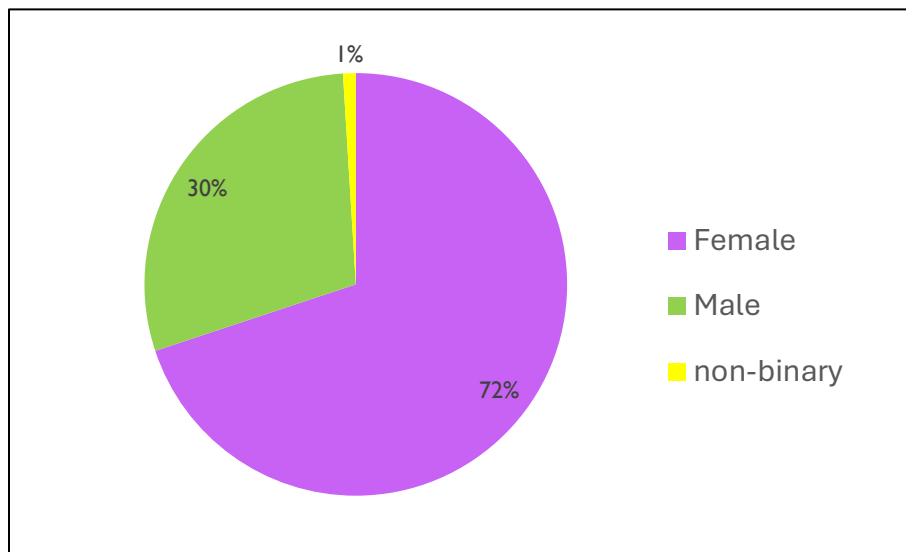
Age

This question received a 91% response rate with 463 responses received compared to 47 “no answers.” The age category breakdown showed the majority of responses came from people between the ages of 45-64 years old with a combined 47%.

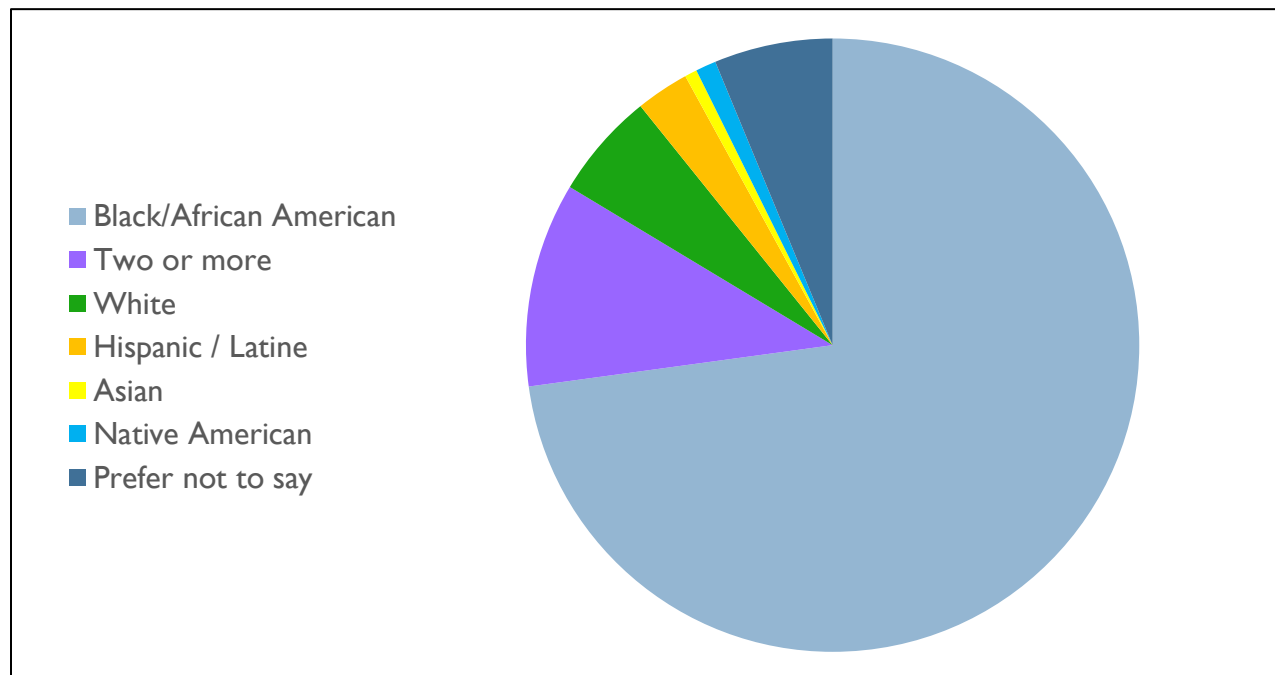
Age range	Response Percentage
15 years or younger	3.0%
16-24 years old	6.5%
25-34 years old	8.4%
35-44 years old	17.1%
45-54 years old	25.9%
55-64 years old	20.7%
65-74 years old	14.0%
75 years or older	4.3%

Gender identification

This question received a 74% response rate with 376 responses received compared to 134 “no answers.” Out of the 376 responses, 72% of respondents identified as “Female”, 30% identified as “Male”, and 1% identified as non-binary.

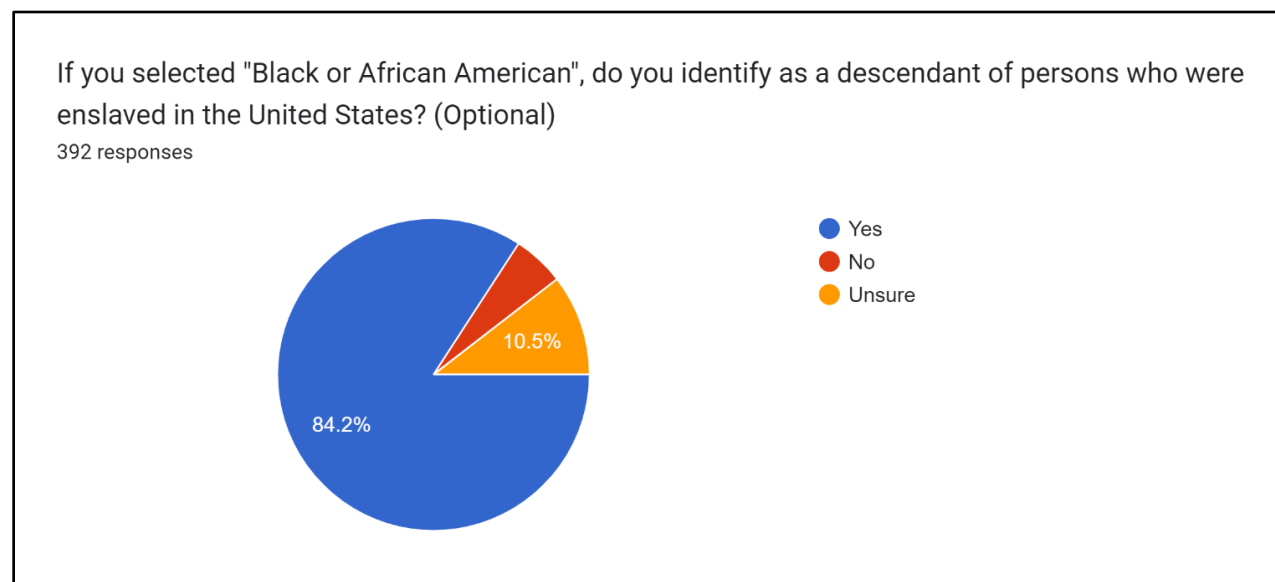


Race & ethnicity



This question received a 91% response rate. Of the 465 responses for the race/ethnicity question, 392 people indicated they had selected “Black or African American” and answered the follow up question of whether or not they identify as a descendant of persons who were enslaved in the United States.

This question was included to reflect California’s new requirement of its agencies to present a separate demographic category for descendants of enslaved people when collecting state employee data.



2.6 SURVEY SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

2.6.4 *Recommended next steps*

Engaging with the community via the CLRCE process provided valuable lessons that should be considered with an ongoing reparations initiative. The three main lessons we learned can be summed up in our guiding principles:

1. *to center community* in the development of a reparations process and program
2. *to move at the speed of trust* with community and partners
3. *to create a reparative process*, not just aim for reparative outcomes

Together, these principles help build a new foundation for repairing past harm and building new partnerships. Feedback from community members, coalition members, and CLRCE grantees confirmed that of the most effective ways to overcome the distrust that exists between community and government is to center community in the decision-making process and design of the initiative. This requires patience and understanding to move at the speed of trust with one another, developing and reinforcing relationships over time. Committing to these helps ensure that the entire process is reparative, not just the eventual outcomes we are working towards.

We recommend keeping with these principles and building upon the work outlined in this 2024 Progress Report. Key things to consider and keep going are bulleted below.

NOTE: The research, landscape analysis, and legal analysis pieces being considered in more detail in a draft scope of work for the REPAIR contract (as outlined at the very end of section [1.4.2](#) on page 14). We recommend working with whichever entity was selected for the REPAIR contract or if no contract has been signed yet, executing one.

Community-centered engagement

- The initiative is off to a good start, but community is clear the reparations conversation needs to continue by building upon the reparative and community centered process that was started.
- We learned there is still a lot of education that needs to happen around reparations at various levels of government and Sacramento's history. Any reparations initiative should continue engaging and working with community in this regard.
- It is difficult to reach everyday residents and doing so requires sustained efforts to physically go into communities with materials, presence at events, and canvassing.

Coalition engagement

- Continuing to have discussions with engaged community members and leaders is important to maintain and deepen relationships. This will enable the dialogues around reparative strategies and approaches to be expansive as well as inclusive.

- Maintaining connection and participation in monthly coalition meetings with organizations and other local jurisdictions across the country as hosted by First Repair/AARN and BARHII will help keep anyone working on the initiative up to speed with the movement and in a supportive community of practice. See section [3.6](#) for more information.

Research

- Continue the research paths explored by the UCD graduate students and see if access can be gained to review county court records that were inaccessible for the students.
- Continue assessing the data from the CLRCE survey to more clearly identify city resident sentiments from non-city residents.

Landscape analysis

- Continue reviewing the various reparations commissions, committees, and task forces that have formed in other jurisdictions to assess their formation, status, funding, scope, and administrative supports.

Legal analysis

- A legal analysis and recommended strategy for what is within the locus of control of a municipality and can be legally defensible in a court of law.
- How are other reparations programs holding up, have they faced legal challenges and if so, how have they overcome them, adjusted, or had to retool?

State considerations

- Evaluate the bills passed and the implications of the measures that did not but are set to be reintroduced during the next legislative session.
- The city could consider adapting California's new requirement of its state agencies to present a separate demographic category for descendants of enslaved people when collecting state employee data to be collected with city employee data.

3 GENERAL INFORMATION & EDUCATION

Gives a primer on defining reparations, how it is considered at various levels of government, and the types of approaches other local jurisdictions have taken.

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3.1 DEFINING REPARATIONS

It is important to acknowledge the term reparations can mean and be interpreted in different ways by different people. It has a wide array of meanings and emotions attached to it. The following section provides some *basic, common, and CLRCE survey collected definitions and themes* of reparations for consideration.

BASIC

Merriam-Webster dictionary

reparation (*noun*)

rep-a-ra-tion

1. a: a repairing or keeping in repair
 b: reparations (plural) : repairs
2. a: the act of making amends, offering expiation, or giving satisfaction for a wrong or injury
 b: something done or given as amends or satisfaction
3. the payment of damages
 Specifically: compensation in money or materials payable by a defeated nation for damages to or expenditures sustained by another nation as a result of hostilities with the defeated nation

PBS – History and Facts About Reparations in the U.S.

Reparation (*noun*)

the making of amends for a wrong one has done, by paying money to or otherwise helping those who have been wronged.

COMMON

International Standards

The most commonly used definition of reparations is accepted internationally as defined by the [United Nations \(U.N.\) General Assembly Resolution: A/Res/60/147, March 21, 2006](#) – Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law.

The following are excerpts from Reparations Law.com that summarize the United Nations (U.N.) Resolution regarding what reparations are:

The right to a remedy and reparation for the breach of Human Rights is a fundamental principle of international law, recognized in numerous treaty texts and affirmed by a range of national and international courts. The victims of gross violations of international human rights law must be provided with full and effective reparation in its five forms: restitution (1), compensation (2), rehabilitation (3), satisfaction (4), & guarantees of non-repetition (5).

- 1. Restitution** - Restitution refers to measures which “restore the victim to the original situation before the gross violations of international human rights law and serious violations of international humanitarian law occurred” (principle 19). Examples of restitution include: restoration of liberty, enjoyment of human rights, identity, family life and citizenship, return to one’s place of residence, restoration of employment and return of property.
- 2. Compensation** - Compensation should be provided for any economically assessable damage, as appropriate and proportional to the gravity of the violation and the circumstances of each case (principle 20). The damage giving rise to compensation may result from physical or mental harm; lost opportunities, including employment, education and social benefits; moral damage; costs required for legal or expert assistance, medicine and medical services, and psychological and social services.
- 3. Rehabilitation** - Rehabilitation includes medical and psychological care, as well as legal and social services.
- 4. Satisfaction** - Satisfaction includes a broad range of measures, including verification of the facts and full and public disclosure of the truth; an official declaration or a judicial decision restoring the dignity, the reputation and the rights of the victim i.e., the search for the disappeared, the recovery and the reburial of remains, public apologies, judicial and administrative sanctions, commemoration, and human rights training.
- 5. Guarantees of non-repetition** - Guarantees of non-repetition comprise broad structural measures of a policy nature such as institutional reforms aiming at civilian control over military and security forces, strengthening judicial independence, the protection of human rights defenders, the promotion of human rights standards in public service, law enforcement, the media, industry and psychological and social services.

CLRCE COLLECTED SURVEY – DEFINITIONS AND THEMES

In the CLRCE survey, respondents were asked the question: *How do you define reparations?*

This open-ended question provided insight into what people think and feel about the term and concept. The following provides a sampling of quotes from respondents that were representative of the majority or responses as well as the six common themes that surfaced. These six themes provide a comprehensive understanding of how respondents define reparations, highlighting the various facets that individuals believe are necessary to address historical injustices effectively. For a more detailed analysis of survey responses, please see section [2.6.3](#).

Sampling of quotes

“Making up for past harm”	“Equal access, opportunity, and repay for generational monies lost”
“Repaying for mistreatment”	“Our fair share of American dream”
“Recognition and compensation for mass injustice”	“Restitution for free labor our ancestors did to build this country under destitute and soul-crushing circumstances”
“Financial compensation or restitution to a group of individuals who have been collectively wronged by a government or institution”	“Education and payments”
“Healing and Accountability”	“Healing communities that have been impacted by any type of oppression”

Six themes from CLRCE survey

1. Direct Compensation: *Monetary payments and fulfillment of historical promises.*
2. Restitution: *Financial and other forms of making amends for past wrongs.*
3. Atonement and Healing: *Apologies, symbolic gestures, and efforts towards healing and accountability.*
4. Investment in Communities: *Funding for community programs, education, and infrastructure development.*
5. Recognition and Justice: *Acknowledgment of past injustices and actions to address systemic issues.*
6. Equal Access and Opportunity: *Ensuring fair access to opportunities and resources as a form of reparations.*

3.2 REPARATIONS AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

3.2.1 Federal

H.R. 40 Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act

Purpose: To address the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and inhumanity of slavery in the United States and the 13 American colonies between 1619 and 1865 and to establish a commission to study and consider a national apology and proposal for reparations for the institution of slavery, its subsequent de jure and de facto racial and economic discrimination against African Americans, and the impact of these forces on living African Americans, to make recommendations to the Congress on appropriate remedies, and for other purposes.

Introduced: Representative John Conyers Jr. (D-MI) introduced the bill every year since 1989. In March of 2018, Representative Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), assumed the role of first sponsor for the bill after Rep. Conyers death.

Status: Introduced, has never received a House floor vote.

In April 2021 it cleared the House Judiciary committee for the first time and was sent to the House floor with 218 cosponsors.

Information: Text for the legislation can be found online [here](#) and a summary about it can be found online at Reparations 4 Slavery's website [here](#).

S. 40 Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act

Purpose: This legislation is the Senate companion to H.R. 40 that would establish a commission to consider proposals for reparations for African American descendants of slavery.

Introduced: Originally introduced by U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-N.J.) in 2019 as S. 1083, it was reintroduced by him in 2023 as S. 40.

Status: Introduced. Has died in committee each time.

Information: Visit Sen. Booker's [website](#) to see more information including full text of the legislation, cosponsors, and a list of organizations that have endorsed it.

Federal Example: Reparations for Victims of Japanese Internment

During World War II, about 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry were forcibly relocated and incarcerated in internment camps. Approximately two-thirds of the internees were U.S. citizens. Below is a short review of the road to reparations for Japanese Americans.

1. **Public Outcry and Advocacy:** Japanese American community leaders and civil rights activists with the [Japanese American Citizens League](#) (JACL), along with their allies, had been advocating for acknowledgment and reparations for many years. Their efforts gained momentum in the 1970s, and the public, media, and lawmakers began to take notice of the injustice suffered by Japanese Americans.
2. **Government Action:** In 1980, President Jimmy Carter opened an investigation and appointed the [Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians](#) to investigate the forced relocation and internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. In 1983, the commission's report, *Personal Justice Denied*, concluded that the internment was not justified by military necessity but was instead a result of racism, wartime hysteria, and a failure of political leadership and recommended that the government pay reparations to the internees.

After a decade after the campaign began and over forty years after the internment camps were closed, the [Civil Liberties Act of 1988](#) was signed into law by President Ronald Reagan. It formally apologized for the unjust internment of Japanese Americans and provided reparations to surviving victims. Each eligible survivor received a tax-free payment of \$20,000 (\$45,000 adjusted to today's dollars) as a symbolic acknowledgment of their suffering and as compensation for lost property and opportunities. By 1992, the federal government had disbursed reparations to 82,219 Japanese Americans who had been interned.

3. **Legal and Moral Principles:** The payment of reparations to Japanese American survivors of internment was rooted in both legal and moral principles. The United States recognized that it had violated the constitutional rights and civil liberties of its citizens. The reparations were intended to serve as a means of providing some measure of redress to the surviving Japanese Americans who had endured the trauma of internment and had suffered economic and social consequences as a result. While reparations could not fully compensate for the lost years or the pain caused, they were seen as a necessary step toward healing and reconciliation, as well as a reminder of the importance of upholding civil liberties and preventing similar injustices in the future.

A June 2023 article in *The Atlantic* by Morgan Ome provides an in depth look at "[What Reparations Actually Bought](#):" The U.S. government's redress program for Japanese Americans showed that the money matters. But it's not the only thing that matters."

3.2 REPARATIONS AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

3.2.2 State

AB-3121 Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans

Purpose: To establish the California Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans, with a Special Consideration for African Americans Who are Descendants of Persons Enslaved in the United States, consisting of 9 members. The bill requires the Task Force to, among other things, identify, compile, and synthesize the relevant corpus of evidentiary documentation of the institution of slavery that existed within the United States and the colonies. The bill requires the Task Force to recommend, among other things, the form of compensation that should be awarded, the instrumentalities through which it should be awarded, and who should be eligible for this compensation. The bill requires the Task Force to submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the California State Legislature. The bill states that any state level reparations authorized under these provisions are not to be considered a replacement for any reparations enacted at the federal level.

Introduced: Then California Assemblymember Dr. Shirley Weber (AD-79) introduced AB-3121 in February 2020. Text of the legislation is available [here](#).

Status: Passed and signed into law by Governor Newsom September 30, 2020.

The Task Force completed its work and delivered its [final report](#) to the California State Legislature on June 29, 2023.

Information: The legislation determined the Task Force shall have the administrative, technical, and legal assistance of the Department of Justice. You can find more information about AB-3121 including past [meetings](#), task force [members](#), and the final report on the California Department of Justice [website](#).

Note: In January 2023, mayoral staff provided witness testimony to the Task Force as part of a panel of local municipal reparations efforts. A video recording of the presentation can be viewed online by scrolling to the [3:00:18 timestamp here](#) and the PowerPoint presentation can be reviewed online [here](#).

In March 2023, Mayor Steinberg provided remarks to the Task Force for the first in-person hearings held in Sacramento. The Mayor's remarks can be viewed online by scrolling to the [1:20:35 timestamp here](#).

Others: To date, Illinois and New York are the only other states to put forward statewide conversations on reparations. Illinois' is focused on surveying the

state's [procurement process](#) and New York passed [legislation](#) to form a commission to study reparations in June 2023 that was signed by the Governor in December.

Next Steps: In January 2024, the California Legislative Black Caucus introduced a [priority package of 14 measures](#) in response to the California Reparations Task Force's final report. Several bills were also run independently of the 2024 CLBC Reparation Priority Bill Package by [Sen. Bradford](#) who was a Task Force member: [SB 1403](#) (California American Freedman Affairs Agency) and [SB 1331](#) (Fund for Reparations and Reparative Justice).

As of August 31, 2024, ten bills presented by the Black Caucus were passed by the legislature, including [SB 1050](#) (Restitution for Unjust Property Takings), measures against discrimination of natural hairstyles, and requiring grocery stores in under-served communities to notify the state if they plan to close.

The California Legislative Black Caucus released a statement indicating they will continue to work on SB 1403 to reintroduce it next year alongside some of the other measures in their reparations priority bill package that did not advance but deferred any questions and comments to Sen. Bradford's office regarding SB 1331.

3.2 REPARATIONS AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

3.2.3 Local

It is important to distinguish between the different realities of developing and implementing reparations at a city level of government compared to the state or federal levels. Reparations enacted at a city level of government (municipal) have several key differences due to their scale, scope, and jurisdiction or locus of control compared to state and federal governments.

Some of the primary distinctions to keep in mind can be broken down into four categories and include:

Legal and Constitutional Considerations

- Reparations programs can face constitutional challenges, especially when they involve issues related to race-based decisions, property rights, equal protection, and due process. Any reparations proposal would need to define eligibility criteria, such as who qualifies for reparations, for what specific historical injustices, and how the injustices are still impacting harmed parties today. This requires a narrowly tailored approach to identify and verify individuals or communities affected by those injustices.
- Federal reparations can be implemented through congressional legislation or by executive order and would have a broader legal framework to support their constitutionality.
- An example of this is the Civil Liberties act of 1988 for victims of Japanese internment.
- Local governments may also be constrained by state laws, state constitutions, and federal laws when trying to implement reparations programs. They are often bound by state preemption laws, which restrict their ability to enact certain policies that may conflict with state laws.
- An example of this is Proposition 209 in California, passed in 1996 which prohibits University of California schools and other state entities from using race, ethnicity or sex as criteria in public employment, public contracting and public education.

Scope and Scale

- City-level reparations would typically be smaller in scope and scale compared to state or federal reparations. This is because cities have limited geographical areas and legislative oversight compared to a state or federal government.
- Cities also have more limited resources from narrower tax bases and obligations to provide and maintain public infrastructure such as water, sewer, garbage collection, streets, police, and fire services.

Funding

- City governments may struggle to fund reparations adequately due to their limited budgets. This could lead to challenges in providing meaningful compensation or support to impacted communities.
- State and federal governments have access to more resources, making it theoretically easier to provide more substantial financial compensation commensurate with the level of harm experienced and the organizational supports to effectively deliver.

Targeted Approach

- City-level reparations can be more tailored to the specific historical injustices that occurred within that city. Reparations can address local incidents of discrimination, such as exclusionary zoning, police brutality, or specific historical events.
- A narrowly tailored approach can help build public and political support for city-level reparations. By focusing on specific, well-documented cases of injustice, it can be easier to communicate the purpose and rationale of the program to the public and garner broad support.
- Federal reparations, on the other hand, may focus on addressing systemic or nationwide injustices, such as slavery, segregation, or discrimination as seen in the language of the federal proposals for H.R. 40 and S. 40.

3.3 EXAMPLES OF REPARATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

In addition to the federal example of Reparations for Victims of Japanese Internment in section [3.2.1](#), there have been some other instances of direct repair for specific harms committed by institutions in the United States. The following three examples demonstrate specific instances of documented harm and the attempts of redress for each.

Please note this section only provides a brief context for each case, a summary of outcomes, and overall raises some questions and issues to be considered in the pursuit of reparations. This section is not a thorough documentation of these cases.

3.3.1 *Georgetown University*

In 2014, pressure from the student body pushed Georgetown University to publicly acknowledge that the university had held slaves and sold 272 people in order to save the university financially in 1838.

Outcome (2015)

- **Restitution:** Preferential admissions to Georgetown University for descendants of people sold by the university. Many argued however that educational support for descendants needs to start during early childhood education so that people have a chance at even being competitive to take advantage of preferential admissions status.
- **Memorial:** Campus building names changed: one to the name of one of the slaves that had been sold; one to a free woman of African descent.
- **Education:** Created a booklet called, “What We Know: Georgetown University and Slavery,” which was distributed across campus and used in an on-campus teach-in.
- **GU272 descendant groups formed:** “GU271” stands for “Georgetown University 272” to represent the 272 enslaved peoples sold by the University. Multiple groups were formed, each seeking related but different forms of redress, demonstrating the complexity of reactions and diversity of thought around reparative actions.

One group sought legal representation, others were interested in pushing the university to do more including support for family reunification, while some were interested in establishing a foundation to support efforts of descendants and groups working to alleviate impacts of slavery. Additionally, some of the descendants wanted to play a larger role in determining the shape reparations would take but were not invited to participate in the working group.

3.3.2 Police Brutality in Chicago, Illinois

Between 1971 and 1992, Chicago Police Commander Jon Burge and detectives under his command tortured at least 118 predominantly Black/African American men during interrogations. Federal prosecutors indicated the methods of torture used were designed to cause severe physical and mental injury including suffocation, beatings, burnings, electric shock to the genitals, and denial of food, water, and bathrooms to obtain confessions, which were then used to secure criminal convictions and severe sentences, up to and including the death penalty.

Torture survivors, their family, and community members, along with reporters, organizers, and lawyers, led a 30-year struggle for redress. As a result, they won Burge's termination from the Chicago Police Department, an official acknowledgment of a systemic practice of torture, and the exoneration of 21 Burge torture survivors who were subsequently released from death row and prison. Some survivors were able to file successful civil lawsuits for wrongful conviction and obtain financial compensation. However, many survivors could not successfully file lawsuits because the statute of limitations had passed. Additionally, almost 30 remained behind bars based on convictions secured through confessions obtained by torture.

Beyond Burge's termination with a full pension, no police officers or county officials responsible for the torture and subsequent cover-up, or who pursued and upheld prosecutions based on confessions obtained by torture, were held accountable. One Cook County State Attorney, Richard M. Daley, declined a request from a Police Superintendent to investigate Burge's torture of Andrew Wilson, a suspect given the death penalty for the murder of police officers in 1982. Wilson had been admitted to the hospital with lacerations on various parts of his head, chest bruises, and second-degree thigh burns with more than a dozen of the injuries documented as caused while in police custody. Daley instead publicly commended Burge and years later went on to become the Mayor of Chicago while others during the same time period went on to become prosecutors and judges.

Outcome

- **Acknowledgement:** Official apology from the City of Chicago to living survivors given by Mayor Rahm Emmanuel in 2015 during the announcement of the creation of a reparations package for torture victims.
- **Compensation:** \$5.5 million Reparations Fund for Burge Torture Victims divided equally (approximately \$100,000 per survivor) among 57 living survivors with credible claims of torture by Jon Burge and detectives under his command between 1971 and 1992. The fund was passed by the City Council making the City of Chicago the first municipal government to approve compensating victims who have valid claims of police torture.

- **Access:** Free enrollment in City Colleges for torture survivors, immediate family, and grandchildren.
- **Employment:** Priority access to city employment for torture survivors.
- **Counseling:** Creation of a counseling and organizing center for survivors and all people affected by police violence in Chicago.
- **Creation of a Public Memorial:** Promised since 2015, funding for the memorial stalled for nearly a decade until Mayor Brandon Johnson during Juneteenth in 2023 announced the City of Chicago received a \$6.8 million donation from the Mellon Foundation for public memorials and that the city would contribute an additional \$1 million and land for the memorial.
- **Public Education:** Chicago Public School curriculum to include a section co-developed with organizers and torture survivors entitled “Reparations Won: A Case Study in Police Torture, Racism, and the Movement for Justice.”
- **State action:** The state legislature passed a bill authorizing creation of the Illinois Torture Inquiry Relief Commission (TIRC) to investigate cases of people "in which police torture might have resulted in wrongful convictions". Since its creation in 2009, over 130 cases have been heard and the legislature tried in 2014 to expand the scope of the Commission but failed to get enough support.

The forms of redress above were not easily achieved and the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois are still struggling to determine how to provide just redress for the torture victims. The case shows how despite having some clear facts, the case for reparations can be difficult to make when time has elapsed and there are no official records to support a legal case. Some of the clear facts that helped get a reparations package passed, and a state Commission formed included:

- a specific period of time the harm occurred (*1970's-1990's*)
- a specific set of identified harms (*physical and mental torture*)
- identifying the entity responsible for the harm (*Chicago Police Department*)
- demonstrated impacts (*physical harm, criminal convictions and severe sentences, up to and including the death penalty*)

One of the most significant lessons learned in the Chicago campaign for reparations is how hard implementation can be. It is important to think ahead, beyond passage of legislation, and to build a team (including and beyond organizers) who possess the necessary knowledge, skills, experiences, and most importantly, energy and commitment, to help ensure robust and principled implementation of a comprehensive policy package.

3.3.3 North Carolina State Eugenics Board

Between 1929 and 1974, the North Carolina State Eugenics Board ordered the sterilization of 7,600 people against their will. Hundreds more were sterilized under orders issued by county governments based on petitions by local doctors and social workers. Eighty-five percent of people overall, and Ninety-eight percent of people sterilized in the 1960s, were Black / African American. More than Seventy-five percent of forced sterilizations in North Carolina occurred at the height of the Jim Crow era.

Outcome

- **Acknowledgment:** Apology to living survivors.
- **Compensation:** \$10 million fund divided equally (approximately \$45,000 per survivor) among living survivors with provable claims against the State Eugenics Board. Compensation received by survivors does not count toward calculations of eligibility for state benefits or state tax liability.
- **Memorial:** plaque and creation of traveling exhibit (unfunded).
- **Policy changes:** Eugenics Board closed (1974); law allowing forced sterilization repealed (2003).
- **Public Education:** Public school curriculum is supposed to include history of eugenics but has not been widely implemented.

The fight for comprehensive reparations for people who were sterilized against their will in North Carolina faced several challenges and shortcomings, including:

- A state budget crisis.
- Concerns that the state would face unlimited liability if there was no cap on the compensation fund.
- A sense that taxpayers were being asked to pay for past wrongs committed by others.
- Reparations were not provided for people sterilized under orders by county officials that were not officially sanctioned by the State Eugenics Board.
- Survivors were given a relatively short time period to file a claim, and no official efforts were made to conduct outreach to survivors.
- Many survivors were unable to provide proof that they qualified for compensation because many records had been lost or destroyed.

- Many survivors or their guardians had signed consent forms under threat of being denied welfare entitlements or being institutionalized (although the reparations law created a presumption that minors and adults deemed “incompetent” under the law were involuntarily sterilized).
- No compensation was available to the descendants of people harmed by the practice. When compensation was offered in 2013 to living survivors of a practice that took place between 1929 and 1974, many people who had been forcibly sterilized were no longer alive.

The North Carolina State Eugenics Board example of reparations for forced sterilizations presents some complicated questions and considerations for pursuing reparations for government sanctioned actions.

First, reparations for state forced sterilization programs are not exclusively owed or given to Black/African American people, but to all individuals who are able to prove they were sterilized against their will. In fact, legislators actively promoted the fact that White people would be receiving benefits under the legislation in order to avoid perceptions that only Black/African American people would receive compensation.

Secondly, the movement to obtain reparations for forced sterilization in North Carolina was not driven or led by the survivors, but rather by legislators, governors, and other system players without a direct stake in the outcome—and competing interests with survivors.

Third, the reparations ultimately obtained were limited to monetary compensation to living survivors who were able to prove entitlement through documentary evidence and did not reach the hundreds of people who were illegally sterilized pursuant to county orders. Survivors only had three years to make a claim. The total amount of compensation was also capped at \$10 million, regardless of how many people came forward, creating a disincentive for survivors to seek out others, as that would reduce everyone’s compensation.

Although survivors received an apology and the promise of a permanent memorial, the healing and educational services for survivors and their families originally recommended by the Task Force never became a reality and changes to the public-school curriculum were never fully implemented.

3.4 SNAPSHOT OF LOCAL TASK FORCE, COMMITTEE, & COMMISSION TYPES

There are various forms a formal reparations task force, committee, or commission can take. This section is meant to provide a general outline of some of the types that have been considered and enacted in other local jurisdictions.

With hundreds of cities and communities launching reparations commissions and/or similar redress efforts across the country, it is important to understand the differences between the duties, scope, member selection, administrative support, and authority associated with the various types of city initiatives and efforts.

Ultimately it will be up to the community, next mayor, and city council to decide what form a formal reparations body (task force, committee, commission, etc.), if any should be formed in Sacramento.

Sampling of Existing Task Forces, Committees, and Commissions

The following pages provide a non-exhaustive sample of five different local reparations commissions to demonstrate the variance in design and approaches. There is a brief description for each of the five jurisdictions followed by a comparison table. The descriptions and comparison chart on the following pages are meant to provide an overview of the key differences and considerations between different forms of reparations bodies to help inform how Sacramento may consider forming its own version.

Please note, more research is needed to evaluate other forms, examples, jurisdictions and to determine the current status of the five examples below as this information was last updated January 2024 for the CLRCE toolkit.

San Francisco, CA | [African American Reparations Advisory Committee](#)

15-member public committee created by ordinance and selected by the Board of Supervisors via applications. Members were paid \$500/month, higher than other SF City commissions at around \$100/month. Virtual meetings were noticed and held monthly over the two-year period of service. The Commission was tasked with developing a final report of harm to Black lives by the city and specific actions to address repair which was delivered to and unanimously approved by the Board of Supervisors in July 2023.

The Reparations Committee advises the Board of Supervisors, the Mayor, the Human Rights Commission, and the public on the development of a San Francisco Reparations Plan. The plan highlights ways that City policies have harmed Black lives. It includes specific actions to address discrimination and inequities in areas like housing, education, transit access, and food security. The Committee is comprised of 15 appointed members who work across several subcommittees.

Update: San Francisco recently announced \$75 million in budget cuts. Within those cuts was \$4 million to create a proposed Office of Reparations which would be a first in the country. Separately, San Francisco created the Dream Keeper Initiative in 2021, a program designed to invest in the Black Community which seeks to allocate \$60 million each year.

Los Angeles, CA | [Reparations Advisory Commission](#)

In June 2021, the City of Los Angeles established the Reparations Advisory Commission, a private seven-member blue-ribbon task force comprised of leading voices in activism, academia, law, and racial justice — to advise the City on a future reparations pilot program for a group of Black residents.

The L.A. Reparations Advisory Commission is tasked with providing recommendations for the format, function, and goals of a potential reparations pilot program in Los Angeles, including strategies and opportunities to seek public and/or private dollars to fund pilot programs. The Commission will identify an appropriate academic partner, before beginning the formal process of developing and advocating for implementation of a pilot reparations program targeted at a cohort of Black residents.

The blue-ribbon commission's members were selected jointly by then Mayor Garcetti and African-American members of the City Council, and are supported by the Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department's Office of Racial Equity with Requests for Proposals (RFP's) advertised for additional support by a Project Manager, an Academic Partner, and a Development Partner. \$500k was allocated to support the RFPs and work.

Evanston, IL | [Reparations Committee](#)

Six-member permanent committee established to support the work of establishing the City of Evanston Reparations Fund and housing focused reparations work. This focus was established via public meetings with the strongest case for reparations by the City of Evanston in the area of housing, where there is sufficient evidence showing the City's part in housing discrimination as a result of early City zoning ordinances in place between 1919 and 1969, when the City banned housing discrimination.

The committee is tasked with implementing the now established Restorative Housing Program which includes determining eligibility, qualified residents, fund distribution and more. The work of the original sub-committee and subsequent permanent committee are the first examples of a municipal reparations program in effect. Evanston's work is also the only current formal example of a city that has identified a specific period of government harm (housing) in need of repair and identified funding (the municipal cannabis retailers' occupancy tax and real estate transfer tax) to provide a reparations process that fits within the narrow legal requirements of accountability to withstand legal challenges. As of August 16, 2023 the city had disbursed over \$1 million in reparations funds through the Local Reparations Restorative Housing Program and updated the program to allow for cash payouts. A recent [survey](#) of 3,500 Evanston residents showed wide support for the program with 70% of white, 64% of Black, 61% of Latino, and 62% of Asian respondents viewing it as "good public policy" across the city.

Providence, RI | [Providence Municipal Reparations Commission](#)

On July 15, 2020, then Mayor Elorza, joined by members of the African American Ambassadors Group and community members, enacted a community-driven [Executive Order](#) committing the city to a process of Truth, Reconciliation, and municipal Reparations for Black, Indigenous People, and People of Color in Providence.

Through this executive order, the city committed to advancing a social justice process that works in three parts. First, the city worked to identify the Truth by examining the role of the State of Rhode Island and the City of Providence in supporting the institution of slavery, the genocide of Indigenous People, forced assimilation, and seizure of land, among other policies. As part of this first step, historians reviewed local and state laws and all other forms of public and private sector discrimination against people of African or Indigenous heritage and their descendants. This process was developed with and crafted by the Mayor's African American Ambassador Group, which meets regularly and serves as a direct line of communication between the community and the Administration.

Once the collection of Truth was completed, findings were used to begin the process of Reconciliation. To advance this work, the City unveiled a Request for Proposals to launch the Reconciliation phase of the city's [commitment](#) to Truth-Telling, Reconciliation and Municipal Reparations after receiving a \$100,000 grant from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation. Through the last step of this process, the city will take measures to reverse the injuries resulting from the Truth findings and advise what appropriate policies, programs, and projects may be executed based on recommendations that accomplish this mission. These will also work to address local laws and policies that continue negatively impact Black, Indigenous People, and People of Color in Providence.

In August of 2022, Mayor Elorza signed a formal city apology and unveiled a proposed Municipal Reparations Budget based on the three-phase process of recommendations. The city used federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars for a \$10 million dollar allocation. Since federal money requires race-neutral program distribution, the program was based on census tracts and people of all races may qualify within a census tract. Rather than direct payments to residents, the funds are distributed through investments into small businesses and programs, including workforce training and financial literacy.

Asheville, NC / Buncombe County, NC | [Community Reparations Commission](#)

The Reparations Commission is empowered to make short, medium, and long-term recommendations that will make significant progress toward repairing the damage caused by public and private systemic racism. The task of the Reparations Commission is to issue a report in a timely manner for consideration by the City and other participating community groups for incorporation into their respective short-term and long-term priorities and plans with five focus areas: housing, economic development, health, education and criminal justice. It is a 25 member commission with a public nomination process and final selection by the City of Asheville and County of Buncombe. The work will unfold over a three phase process of 1) Information Sharing and Truth-Telling; 2) Formation of a Reparations Commission; and 3) Finalize and Present the Report. The work is supported by an RFP selected and contracted professional project manager team: TEQuity LLC, an African-American-owned management consulting firm specializing in advancing equity through the use of project management services, strategic planning, technology, and analytics. The contract budget is not to exceed \$365,000.

COMPARISON CHART

City, Name, Term, paid?	Creation, members, date, type, and name	Selection process & administrative support	Public meetings	About / Duties
San Francisco, CA African American Reparations Advisory Committee 2 years / \$500 month	Created an official 15-member committee by ordinance via the SF Board of Supervisors, Dec. 2020 Ordinance information	Board of Sups. selection to qualified seats via application. Administrative support provided by the SF Human Rights Commission which has its own office, budget, and staff.	Virtual meetings. Public for full commission. Non-public meetings for sub-committees	The Reparations Committee advises the Board of Supervisors, the Mayor, the Human Rights Commission, and the public on the development of a San Francisco Reparations Plan. The plan will highlight ways that City policies have harmed Black lives. It will also include specific actions to address discrimination and inequities in areas like housing, education, transit access, and food security.
Los Angeles, CA Reparations Advisory Commission No set time but likely 2024, not paid	7-member Blue Ribbon Task Force created in June 2021 by Mayor with participation of three African American members of Council.	Mayor Garcetti selected (4) and three African American members of the City Council selected one each. Admin support is provided by the Civil + Human Rights and Equity Dept Office of Racial Equity. RFP for a project manager, academic partner, & development partner.	Not public	Tasked with providing recommendations for the format, function, and goals of a potential reparations pilot program in Los Angeles, including strategies and opportunities to seek public and/or private dollars to fund pilot programs. Must identify an appropriate academic partner and development partner (via RFP's) before beginning the formal process of developing and advocating for implementation of a pilot reparations program targeted at a cohort of Black residents.

City, Name, Term, paid?	Creation, members, date, type, and name	Selection process & administrative support	Public meetings	About / Duties
<p>Evanston, IL</p> <p>More info. available online here.</p> <p>No set time, not paid.</p>	<p>Began by June 2019 Resolution affirming commitment to end structural racism; Sep. 2019 established sub-committee of council which was then dissolved to expand the committee size to six to include public members and codified by ordinance November 2020.</p> <p>Reparations Committee website.</p>	<p>Six members appointed by mayor. Two members are councilmembers.</p> <p>Supported by staff from City Manager's office.</p>	<p>Yes, public in-person monthly meetings.</p>	<p>In July 2019, the Equity and Empowerment Commission held community meetings to solicit feedback from community members on what reparations would look like for Evanston. Affordable housing and economic development were the top priorities. A report was submitted to Council for consideration and was the basis for Resolution 126-R-19, "Establishing the City of Evanston Reparations Fund and the Reparations Subcommittee." Reparations, and any process for restorative relief, must connect between the harm imposed and the City. The strongest case for reparations by the City of Evanston is in the area of housing, where there is sufficient evidence showing the City's part in housing discrimination as a result of early City zoning ordinances in place between 1919 and 1969, when the City banned housing discrimination. View the Evanston Policies and Practices Directly Affecting the African American Community, 1900 - 1960 (and Present) draft report written by Dino Robinson of Shorefront Legacy and Dr. Jenny Thompson of Evanston History Center.</p>

City, Name, Term, paid?	Creation, members, date, type, and name	Selection process & administrative support	Public meetings	About / Duties
Providence, RI Providence Municipal Reparations Commission No set time, not paid	First established as a three part process of Truth, Reconciliation, and Reparations by Executive Order , July 2020. Commission established February 2022 by Executive Order	13 members total: 7 members appointed by Mayor; 6 members appointed by City Council.	Not public, not paid	August 2022 commission released its report , informed by a previous report, “ A Matter of Truth ” developed in a truth telling phase of work by the Mayor’s African American Ambassadors Group established in response to disparities during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. This is a three-part phased effort of Truth, Reconciliation, and Reparations. More info. online here.
Asheville, NC Community Reparations Commission Website for Commission work Up to 18-24 month / not paid	25-member temporary public commission, created by resolution passed July 2020.	5 members selected by City; 5 by County; 15 nominated by persons from historically impacted neighborhoods via a public nomination process , to include public housing and former historically Black neighborhoods; 2 nominations/ neighborhood and 3 for the Public Housing Community in Asheville. Admin support from city staff and an RFP selected project management consultant.	Monthly public meetings	Tasked with issuing a report in a timely manner with short, medium, and long-term recommendations that focus on five impact areas which include housing, economic development, health, education, and criminal justice. Report will be issued to the Asheville City Council and the Buncombe County Commissioners. Members are expected to contribute approximately 5-10 hours per month, possibly up to 18 to 24 months.

3.5 SACRAMENTO HISTORICAL CONTEXT PREVIEW

This preview was developed for the CLRCE toolkit. It is not a comprehensive historical context but rather a primer and resource to begin introducing examples of policies and practices that create and perpetuate inequity in Sacramento. It highlights areas where we have additional information and research available as well as areas for further study.

This information and the additional resources are meant to help provide context for what a city level reparations program may focus on, keeping in mind the city can only be held legally accountable for its specific actions and role in events. It cannot for instance be held accountable for actions of the federal government, banks, or school districts.

Introduction: City Government Roots of Disparities

The significant gaps between Black and white Sacramento residents' health, wealth, education, and other outcomes have their roots in a range of decisions made by every level of political unit in the United States, from federal protection of slavery to state discriminatory laws to local zoning policies. While much attention is focused on the federal and state levels, cities and other municipal governments have played a significant role in creating and exacerbating these discrepancies. Discriminatory housing practices, including creating exclusionary neighborhoods, delivering widely disparate services, subjecting neighborhoods to pollution and other unhealthy products of urban life, utilizing the threat and practice of condemnation and seizure to force Black residents from desirable neighborhoods, as well as policing neighborhoods in measurably disparate fashions are some examples. Black Sacramento residents have resisted these exclusions at every opportunity.

In Sacramento, all of these factors must be assessed in developing historically informed, just reparations proposals. African Americans have lived in California since the Spanish settlement in the late 18th century and moved into Sacramento even before the city grew during the Gold Rush period of U.S. conquest. The prominence of the local population and their location in the state capital made Sacramento a central site for statewide Black organizing, including the multiple statewide Colored Conventions held at St. Andrews African Methodist Episcopal (AME), the oldest continuously operated AME church on the West Coast. By 1900, the relatively small (generally under 500) Black population of the city became concentrated in the West End, a neighborhood nestled between the Sacramento River and the Capitol. When thousands of Black southerners moved west in the World War II Second Great Migration, most could only move into the West End or Del Paso Heights, sparking a growth of Black-owned commercial enterprises in each area. As the Black population grew over the 20th century to almost 1,500 people by 1940, they—and other minorities—lived primarily in the West End, partly because of restrictive deeds and zoning

in the developing white suburbs like Oak Park, Highland Park, Curtis Park, Land Park, East Sacramento, North Sacramento, and Hagginwood. Local and federal government together worked to keep Black residents in the West End during the New Deal, as the Sacramento County Housing Authority and City Housing Authority defined the West End and neighboring Southside as the worst areas in the city, thus depriving owners of access to federally backed loans.

Starting in the 1940s, attorney Nathaniel S. Colley sued the city and 16 developers for unfair discrimination in housing across the city. After the creation of the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency in 1950, that agency played a massive role in displacing Black Sacramento residents. One of its crucial projects was in the West End neighborhood, a roughly 15-square block area. By the 1940s and 1950s, this neighborhood was arguably Sacramento's most diverse and integrated, but city leaders declared it blighted and sought to redevelop it by moving its businesses and residents out, including both historic Black residences and businesses and Japanese commercial and residential areas. The Sacramento Redevelopment Agency utilized eminent domain to buy property from Black residents and business owners at below-market rates, then failed to help them establish businesses in new areas.

A war between the interests of real estate companies, politicians, and residents unfolded in the city council meetings and courts of law from April to October 1954 over the West End. Due to the efforts of the Sacramento NAACP and attorney Nathaniel S. Colley, the city implemented several measures to win their support of the redevelopment of the West End. However, these measures—which included creating a Relocation Committee, adding an equal rights clause in the redevelopment plans, and a 6-point policy statement for economic reparations—were ultimately ineffective in protecting Black people's socio-economic interests because they never actually became laws. Consequently, many Black businesses in particular were displaced or forced to relocate due to the fact that their main clientele were also displaced and scattered to other districts in the city. By the end of 1961, every building in the 15-block area had been demolished. When Black Sacramento residents moved out of the West End, they often chose places like Glen Elder and Oak Park or Del Paso Heights which was not part of the city until 1964 and not covered consistently by racially restrictive covenants.

Due to limited availability of housing and neighborhood options, Black and other racial and ethnic minorities were forced to live in areas nearby or prone to industrial hazards and pollution. Environmental risks and health impacts from living in these areas have included increased exposure risk to high concentrations of lead, poor air quality, and living in older housing stock and infrastructure that may contain asbestos or be susceptible to mold.

Beyond redevelopment, the city government played a key role in developing segregated job markets in Sacramento as Black people were excluded from fire department, police force, and teaching positions as well as other higher-paying city jobs until the late 1940s. Only in

the Sanitation Department could Black Sacramento residents consistently work for the city. Black Sacramento residents sued and lobbied the state government, labor unions, banks, the city, and other entities for access to good-paying jobs during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. The Congress on Racial Equality and Sacramento Committee for Fair Housing led new activist efforts in the 1960s and 1970s along with student groups and, in 1967, the Black Panther Party.

City police played key roles in the suppression of the Black Panther Party and in restricting the movement and options of Black Sacramento residents. Police have also played a key role in the War on Drugs and its impacts to Black and Brown communities with mass incarceration. Police violence also poses immediate health risks to Black Americans, as well as significant ongoing trauma and associated health impacts from fear of violent or threatening encounters.

Cities are designed to provide the basic resources necessary for living safely within a community and they are the most accessible and frequent form of government residents engage with. As such, cities play a unique role in both the built and socio-economic environments where people live, work, and build community. From this brief context, we can see many different points of discrimination and disruption by city government to the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness by Black Sacramentans throughout history.

The following are potential areas for further study that could be considered either entirely or partially within the locus of control of city government.

- City land use and zoning decisions, practices, and policies. *Examples may include:*
 - exclusionary zoning
 - racially restrictive covenants
 - redlining practices
- Redevelopment projects, especially those that utilized eminent domain. *Examples:*
 - Capitol Mall Project
 - redevelopment of the West End
 - highway/freeway developments (Hwy 99, Hwy 50, I-5, Hwy 160)
- Infrastructure investments and disparity. *Examples:*
 - industrial zoning hazards and environmental toxins (ie: lead concentrations)
 - street, sidewalk, lighting, and park infrastructure and maintenance
 - pool segregation
- Employment discrimination. *Examples:*
 - early 1900 policies and practices barring employment in white collar positions
 - disparate hiring, pay, and promotion practices
- Police and Fire. *Examples:*
 - Office of Public Safety Accountability audit of search & seizure practices

3.6 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

There is a growing number of organizations focused on engaging local government due to its unique role in perpetuating, addressing, and correcting discriminatory policies and practices. Because local governments vary widely across the United States in form, size, population, and historical contexts, many of these organizations focus on supporting cities, grassroots organizations, and activists with the tools, research, and connections they need to enact change based on their needs.

Some organizations that are focused on municipal reparations efforts include:

The Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII)

[The Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative](#) (BARHII) was founded in 2002 and is a national engine for health equity thought leadership. BARHII sits at the unique intersection of thought leadership and practice, deeply informed by equity leaders in government and community who deal each day with the demands of systems change for equity. They are working to support the reparations movement in California and across the nation through statewide advocacy and by creating a learning community of local government staff of reparations initiatives across the state. They host regular coalition meetings for both the statewide advocacy efforts and the coalition of local governments. Sacramento has been engaged in both of these recurring meetings. The point of contact for these meetings is Kelsey Lyles, klyles@barhii.org.

First Repair

[First Repair](#), a national nonprofit organization dedicated to informing local reparations, nationally, is designed to support local efforts to build momentum for federal reparations. They focus on educating and equipping leaders, stakeholders, and allies who are advancing local reparations policies that remedy historic and ongoing anti-Black practices. The organization was founded by former Evanston Alderwoman Robin Rue-Simmons who is credited as the architect of the Evanston Reparations Program. Their knowledge network includes seasoned experts and social innovators with a proven commitment to reparations, racial justice, and Black community empowerment. Their services include workshops, educational symposiums, research, stakeholder development and policy design for local government bodies and institutions.

They also host a national coalition meeting each month and in partnership with the AARN, host regional coalition meetings. Sacramento has been involved in the “West reparations coalition” monthly meetings which occur once a month on Mondays at 9:30am. The point of contact for these meetings is Linda Mann with AARN at u.s.rrnetwork@gmail.com

The African American Redress Network (AARN)

The [African American Redress Network](#) (AARN) is another example of an organization that addresses U.S. historical racial injustices by facilitating interdisciplinary research, capacity-building, education, and advocacy for network members as they secure redress at the local level. They focus on fostering collaboration at the local and national levels, supporting and expanding the work of redress activists, and creating a new broad consensus around redress.

The AARN has a [redress map](#) of instances of reparations and redress efforts across the country as well as [legislative mapping](#) of reparations task forces and/or truth and reconciliation commissions. The research in the AARN maps helps highlight the many different efforts and approaches to redress and reparations commissions, committees, and task forces.

- Resource center: <https://redressnetwork.org/resource-center/>
- Compilation of various toolkits: <https://redressnetwork.org/reparation-toolkit/>
- National organizations: <https://redressnetwork.org/national-organizations/>
- Redress map: <https://redressnetwork.org/redress-map/>

Mayors Organized for Reparations and Equity (MORE) Coalition

We feel the need to mention the [MORE coalition](#) as it was the catalyst for Mayor Steinberg's initial public commitment to address reparations at the local level. It was designed for cities to create municipal reparations proposals that could serve as high-profile demonstrations for how the country could more quickly move from conversation to action on federal reparations for Black Americans. While it no longer has an active presence, most cities that joined MORE remain active in their own pursuits.

Othering & Belonging Institute (OBI)

While not specifically focused on supporting municipal reparations efforts, OBI houses the AB 3121 California Reparations Taskforce resources. Their website states: the [California Reparations Task Force](#) is a history-making effort by the state of California to study the legacy of slavery on African Americans and to develop proposals for reparations.

[On this new page](#) OBI has gathered the complete collection of presentations and testimonies given before the California Reparations Task Force, which have been organized by topic. Taken as a whole, they shed light on the deep structural inequalities in America and illustrate how ongoing reparations efforts are necessary to address racial disparities.

Other resources for consideration include the following articles and videos:

Articles:

- [Reparations As Solution to the Racial Wealth Gap](#) by Shanzeh Khurram
- [How We Repair It: White Americans’ attitudes toward reparations](#), Commentary by Ashley Reichelmann and Matthew Hunt December 2021
- [Economics in Brief: California Will Give Reparations to Descendants of Slaves](#), Next City April 2022.
- [The Case for Climate Reparations in the United States](#), by Manann Donoghoe and Andre Perry March 2023 Brookings Institute

Videos:

- [Rising Up For Reparations](#) a conversation on the promise and practice of reparations being undertaken for Black Americans. Othering & Belonging Institute September 2022.
- [Reparation Information Thought Series](#) National Black Cultural Information Trust (NBCIT.ORG)
- [Cracking the Epidemic](#) (Del Paso Heights), a KCRA production.
- [Segregating Sacramento: How racial agreements shaped neighborhoods and quality of life](#), an ABC10 production.
- [History and Facts About Reparations in the U.S.](#): Documentaries to help learn more about the who, what, when, how, and why of reparations, a PBS production.

NOTE: There are many other organizations and additional resources available including some of the publications that are part of the related city projects in [section 4](#) of this report. This section of additional resources is solely a reference sampling of organizations and references that were engaged during the mayoral reparations initiative.

4 RELATED & NOTABLE CITY PROJECTS

Demonstrates how a reparations initiative can draw upon the work of and is connected with other city initiatives and projects.

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4.1 OVERVIEW

While the City of Sacramento has a clear history of racial discrimination common among American cities, it also has a demonstrated commitment to advancing racial equity that can be seen in projects and initiatives across the city. Steps are being taken to create new partnerships with community, to research and acknowledge disparities, to develop actionable plans to address inequities, and to make amends for past harms.

These efforts, while not directly part of the mayoral reparations initiative are deeply intertwined with creating reparative processes, acknowledging historical injustices, and carving new roadmaps for achieving equitable outcomes for all residents.

The following is a brief list and description of related City projects and resources that may help support the development of a municipal reparations initiative. It is not a comprehensive accounting of all city initiatives that aim to address inequities.

4.2 AFRICAN AMERICAN EXPERIENCE PROJECT

[African American Experience Project](#) (AAE Project)

The City of Sacramento completed the AAE Project which developed an Historic Context Statement and collection of oral histories in an effort to document the history of the African American community in Sacramento. It was a collaboration between the City of Sacramento's historic preservation office and [California State University, Sacramento](#). The project was funded by a \$40,000 grant from the [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#), with the goal of increasing awareness of Black history and cultural resources in Sacramento.

The African American Experience Project filled a crucial gap in the preservation of Sacramento's history. Despite the challenges of racism and exclusion, Sacramento's Black community thrived, thanks to a network of organizations, institutions, businesses, and remarkable individuals. This project aimed to create a historical framework to document the African American experience from the city's early history to the recent past, ensuring its recognition and preservation for future generations.

During the project, the community played an essential role in collecting oral histories and historical documents, which now form an integral part of Sacramento's historical record. If you are interested in accessing or contributing to this collection, please email the city at AAE@cityofsacramento.org or [use this link to submit](#) your oral history interviews, photos, or other documents to be held in the City's archive.

Information like this is critical for understanding the impacts of historical actions upon communities since much of their experience is not captured in official city records, census data, or newspaper coverage.

[View the AAE Historic Context Statement here.](#)

4.3 CITYSTART INITIATIVE

[CityStart Initiative](#)

The City of Sacramento secured a \$75,000 grant to participate in the “CityStart” initiative with [Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund \(CFE Fund\)](#) to focus on addressing wealth inequity. The grant provides the City of Sacramento planning dollars and technical assistance to identify strategies that will financially empower residents, with a focus on the Black/African American community.

The City worked with CFE Fund and Bloomberg Philanthropies’ [Greenwood Initiative](#), whose mission is to accelerate the pace of Black wealth accumulation in the U.S., on the design of its financial empowerment blueprint identifying actionable implementation steps based on the financial needs of residents, especially Black residents.

The blueprint will enhance the steps the City has already taken to ensure financial health of Sacramento residents including the creation of the [Financial Empowerment Center](#) for financial counseling, the [Fines & Fees Justice program](#) to access and reduce fees for low-income residents, development of [youth workforce programs](#), and support of entrepreneurs and local business growth.

The city anticipates the final blueprint being completed in the fall of 2024.

4.4 SACRAMENTO CENTERED ON RACIAL EQUITY (SCORE) INITIATIVE

[Sacramento Centered On Racial Equity \(SCORE\) Initiative](#)

The SCORE initiative and workplan is a new partnership between three entities:

1. [The City of Sacramento](#) via a contract for professional services held by the City Manager's office at the direction of the City Council. Staff from the City Manager's office, the Office of Diversity and Equity, and the Mayor's office collaborate to manage the contract. The Racial Equity Committee serves as the public reporting and directive body for the work with standing SCORE Initiative updates on the committee agenda.
2. [RACE Forward](#), is the professional services entity contracted with the city to deliver the scope of work outlined in the contract. For more than 40 years Race Forward, founded in 1981 as the Applied Research Center, has worked to dismantle structural racism by building collective community power and transforming institutions. From the start, Race Forward's founder Gary Delgado was clear: Black and brown communities hold the key to solving the racial inequities in our systems that have long harmed the lives and communities of people of color. Race Forward is national organization dedicated to catalyzing movement building for racial justice and serves as the facilitator between the City of Sacramento and the community member coalition below.
3. The [Racial Equity Alliance](#) is a self-organized group of local racial equity leaders in coalition together who also created a subset group called the Racial Equity Council to work directly with the City of Sacramento on the SCORE Initiative. They formed in 2020 with the idea that all communities in Sacramento deserve equitable and intentional investments. Their vision for a more equitable Sacramento is one where all communities feel included and valued and where we work together for a more fair, just, and resilient city.

The multi-year and multi-phased SCORE workplan is designed to transform the City's internal and external structure, policies, and procedures to advance racial equity:

- | | |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Task 1: | Truth-telling and Trust-building |
| Task 2: | Finalize City Racial Equity Resolution |
| Task 3: | Develop Partnership & Accountability Strategy to Center Communities of Color for Racial Justice |
| Task 4: | Co-create Citywide Racial Equity Workplan with City and Community |

4.5 RACE AND PLACE IN SACRAMENTO

[Race and Place in Sacramento](#)

Race and Place in Sacramento is a report commissioned for the City of Sacramento to support preparation of the Environmental Justice Element of the Sacramento 2040 General Plan Update. JCH Research, the sole originator of the report, assumes all responsibility for any errors and omissions as well as the content of the report.

The following three paragraphs are an introductory snippet from page 1 of the report with the last two paragraphs specifically about how to use the report:

“For over 100 years, the City of Sacramento has experienced a racial divide that continues to impact how and where economic productivity occurs. A key question guiding this report is - given the multitude of civil rights laws guaranteeing equal protection and opportunity for everyone in the city, how can extreme differences in income, education, health, wealth, and housing exist between residents in different neighborhoods? What is alarming is that we can measure these outcomes by location. Even more hurtful is the fact that we can continually measure these outcomes by race.

This report documents the nationwide history of racial inequality in housing and planning policy and places the growth of Sacramento within that context. Understanding the 100+ year history of racial divide in the city means recognizing how the intergenerational characteristic of race-based economic development requires an interactive social, political, and financial infrastructure of great magnitude. How this infrastructure continues to generate economic forms of inequity that somehow remain compliant with today’s civil rights laws is the conundrum this report attempts to shed light on.

The report is intended to serve as a reference guide. Due to the size of this report, each section is designed, to the extent possible, to function independently where users can go to specific information that can aid in planning and grant writing activities. However, when taken as a whole, the report provides a clear justification for integrating environmental stewardship and poverty intervention into neighborhood planning.”

4.6 CENTER FOR SACRAMENTO HISTORY – DOCUMENTING INEQUALITY

Founded in 1953, the Center for Sacramento History (CSH) educates and enriches the public by collecting, preserving, and making accessible the region’s vast cultural heritage. CSH is a division of the City of Sacramento and is funded by both the city and Sacramento County. It serves as the official repository and research center for historical city and county government records, and houses collections from individuals, families, businesses, and community organizations that chronicle the history of the Sacramento region.

Among the exhibits and programs curated by CSH, their section titled [Documenting Inequality](#) has two particularly relevant topics for the reparations work.

4.6.1 *Desegregating Sacramento*

“Desegregating Sacramento” was produced for the Center for Sacramento History using footage and archival material from their own collections. It is part of the Center's film series that explores the history of systemic racism in the Sacramento region in order to provide a historical context for the issues that affect our community today.

The videos produced in this series can be found [online here](#).

4.6.2 *Video Series: Racism in Sacramento*

The Center for Sacramento History's video series "Unlocking the Past: Exploring Racism in Sacramento" focuses on the history of systemic racism in the Sacramento region in order to provide a historical context for the issues that affect our community today. The goal with these short films is to tell stories from the region in a more complete and honest way, and to face and examine discrimination while acknowledging its long-term effects on our communities.

The films are produced by the Center and local filmmakers using film footage, photographs, and archival material from the Center’s collections, along with interviews with national and local scholars, and people from the community telling their own stories.

The videos in this series can be found online [here](#).

4.7 DRAFT SACRAMENTO URBAN FOREST PLAN

We have about one million trees in Sacramento with an average tree canopy coverage of nineteen percent and a goal of getting to thirty-five percent by 2045 with two million trees. The disparity in coverage between neighborhoods however can range as much as over thirty-five percent to less than ten percent. For example, neighborhoods like Elmhurst and Land Park have more than thirty-five percent canopy coverage while Meadowview, Old North Sac, Robla, and Strawberry Manor have ten to fifteen percent.

The disparity in canopy coverage demonstrates the lasting impacts of redlining upon neighborhoods. Redlined neighborhoods with less canopy coverage are exposed to high ground level surface heat and receive less investment from the city's limited urban forestry maintenance dollars because the money goes to where the trees are due to the risk and liability of not properly maintaining trees in public right of ways.



35%



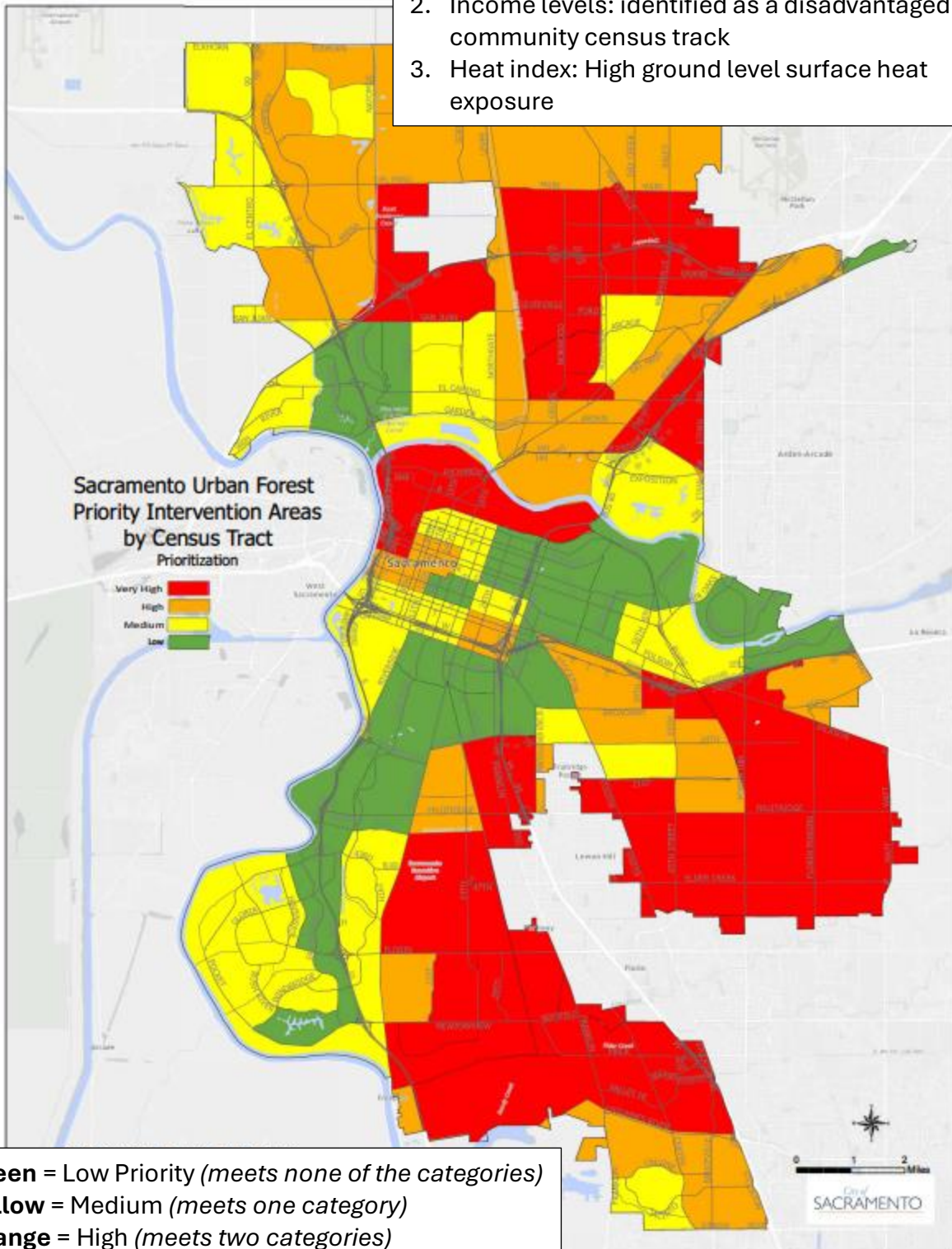
10-15%

The draft Sacramento Urban Forestry Plan provides four recommendations, one of which is to create a “City of Trees for All” which goes on to say: Targeting planting efforts in the neighborhoods with the lowest canopy levels, highest heat exposure, and most socio-economically vulnerable residents will ensure that Sacramento can be the City of Trees for all residents and the benefits of trees are shared equitably. All communities are entitled to the same access to tree canopy and its benefits. Inequities in tree canopy must be addressed. Priority communities for urban forestry programming will be identified through regular assessment of Disadvantaged Community status, urban heat indices, tree canopy percentage, air quality indices, and public health concerns.

To achieve the 2045 goal with a priority on creating a City of Trees for All will require additional funding and coordination as ninety percent of Sacramento’s urban forest are private trees managed by other agencies or private property owners, leaving only ten percent of trees managed by the city in public right of ways and parks.

Priority intervention area qualification categories:

1. Canopy levels: low tree canopy
2. Income levels: identified as a disadvantaged community census tract
3. Heat index: High ground level surface heat exposure



Green = Low Priority (*meets none of the categories*)
Yellow = Medium (*meets one category*)
Orange = High (*meets two categories*)
Red = Very High (*meets all three categories*)

Background

This background information was taken from the staff report and presentation to the City's Racial Equity Committee on August 13, 2024. You can view the staff report [online here](#), the full draft Sacramento Urban Forest Plan [online here](#), and visit the project website at: www.cityofsacramento.gov/sactreeplan

The City of Sacramento released a draft of the Sacramento Urban Forest Plan (SUFP) for public review. The SUFP will be the City's primary planning tool for the protection, expansion, maintenance, sustainability, and enhancement of Sacramento's urban forest. In the draft SUFP, the Social Equity section of the Status of Sacramento's Urban Forest chapter, provides context to the intersection of racial equity and urban tree canopy within the City. Multiple scientific studies have been conducted in Sacramento demonstrating correlations between tree cover, urban heat, race, income, and public health. Based on those studies and significant public feedback on the prioritization of equity, "urban forest priority intervention areas" were identified. These priority areas were selected based on census tract level data for existing tree canopy, state or federal designation as a disadvantaged community, and ground level exposure to extreme heat.

The draft SUFP recommends that canopy expansion efforts should be focused first on those priority residential neighborhoods with the lowest canopy, highest vulnerability to extreme heat, most socio-economically vulnerable populations, and the most significant potential for canopy increase.

The draft SUFP was developed through a multi-year, phased planning effort, which corresponded to the timing of Sacramento's 2040 General Plan update. While the 2040 General Plan identifies overarching goals for the urban forest within the context of other City goals and initiatives, the SUFP provides more detailed direction to City departments for the policies, programs, and implementation actions needed to guide annual work planning towards achievement of the overarching tree canopy goals.

The draft SUFP was available for a 60-day public review and comment period from April 26 through June 21. To simplify the collection and processing of feedback on the public review draft, the project team created an online self-guided workshop. The draft SUFP and the online self-guided workshop were available on the project website. Over 550 comments were provided through the online workshop and staff were able to speak directly to the public and receive comments at over 20 community meetings and events. Project staff are currently viewing and considering all public comments to inform potential revisions to the SUFP. Staff anticipate finalizing redlined edits and bringing the SUFP forward to Council for an adoption hearing in Fall 2024. Questions can be submitted to project staff via email at urbanforestplan@cityofsacramento.org.

4.8 ADDITIONAL CITYWIDE PLANNING EFFORTS

While the projects listed above are highlighted as key initiatives that can help inform a reparations initiative, there are other citywide projects and planning efforts that are related and should be considered. By visiting the [City's Parks Plan](#), you can see the following snapshot of other planning efforts listed on page 11. Similarly, in the Parks Plan, [Chapter 5: Park Access and Equity](#) (page 113 onward) presents a series of maps and statistics that show the distribution of parks, service gaps, and deficiencies to identify areas of greatest needs.



2040 General Plan Update

Sacramento's 2040 General Plan Update identifies permitted land uses and 10 key strategies related to housing, tree canopy enhancement, infrastructure in underserved neighborhoods, and transportation, amongst others. The plan includes the development of the Youth, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Element (YPRO) that defines goals and policies related to developing parks and recreation facilities.



Sacramento Climate Action and Adaptation Plan

Sacramento's Climate Action and Adaptation Plan was developed in tandem with the 2040 General Plan Update process. The plan supports the City of Sacramento's effort to mitigate and adapt to climate change by setting new targets and identifying key strategies. It builds off the City's 2012 Climate Action Plan, the City's Climate Emergency Declaration, and incorporates recommendations from the Mayor's Commission on Climate Change to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reach carbon neutrality by 2045.



2018-2023 YPCE Strategic Plan: Diverse Dynamic Together

Adopted in 2018, the Youth, Parks, & Community Enrichment Strategic Plan involved City leaders, stakeholders, partners, and the YPCE Executive Team in creating a five-year guiding document for Department services. The Strategic Plan initiated the rebranding of the City's Parks & Recreation Department into the Youth, Parks, and Community Enrichment Department. It identified YPCE's new vision, mission, and goals for the future, defined a new organizational structure, and identified roles and responsibilities in conjunction with prioritized action items for a five-year timeframe.



2017 Citywide Youth Development Campaign

The 2017 Citywide Youth Development Campaign outlined a unified effort to deliver child and youth services operated or funded by the City. The plan guided the City and partners in providing youth with research-based support and opportunities, while integrating social justice principles into program delivery and organizational and institutional practices.



Age-Friendly Community Action Plan

The Age-Friendly Community Action Plan represents a commitment on the part of the City to improve the quality of life for older Sacramentans and will serve to guide the City in preparing for its growing aging population. The plan focuses on the specific needs of older adults and includes goals and actions to meet these needs. One of the key components of the plan is the involvement of actions supported by YPCE and are intended to align with the Parks Plan 2040.

4.9 SAFE BLACK SPACE – SPECIAL REPARATIONS CIRCLE

The city has a contract with Safe Black Space to help provide healing circles to the community. These are funded from the 2022 midyear budget adjustment that allocated \$500k towards racial equity as recommend by Mayor Steinberg.

About Safe Black Space

Safe Black Space offers monthly Online Community Healing Circles on second Saturdays from 3:00- 4:30pm PT as well as In-Person Community Healing Circles intermittently. Safe Black Space envisions a world, where in the face of racial trauma, Black communities are equipped to heal and thrive. To learn more, visit www.safeblackspace.org

Special reparations circle

On Saturday, June 22, 2024 Safe Black Space, a local non-profit organization, provided an In-Person Special Reparations Community Healing Circle co-sponsored by the City of Sacramento's Mayor's Office - Office of Diversity and Equity and in collaboration with the Center on Race, Immigration and Social Justice (CRISJ) at California State University, Sacramento (CSUS).

The circle provided an opportunity for individuals of African ancestry to share their perspectives, insights, and experiences related to reparations. The timing of the event is noteworthy, as it followed "Juneteenth" which commemorates when over 250,000 enslaved people in Galveston, Texas finally received news of their emancipation (freedom) on June 19, 1865.

Prior to attending, each registered guest was asked to complete a survey about reparations from the Mayor's Office to obtain feedback as Sacramento explores how to develop municipal level reparations. Attendees were invited to join the circle whether they had a personal perspective, background knowledge, or simply a curiosity to learn more about reparations. The National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N'COBRA) defines reparations as *"A process of repairing, healing and restoring a people injured because of their group identity and in violation of their fundamental human rights by governments, corporations, institutions and families."* This was the focus of the circle held on June 22nd.

Knowing the topic of reparations and discussions around it can bring up several feelings and reactions, the circle was provided at the request of the Mayor's Office as they sought survey feedback from local community members. The circle provided a safe space for Black people to engage in open conversations, deepen their understanding of reparations, as well as learn about Black racial stress, trauma and triumph, and work towards healing.

Approximately 40 people participated, including CSUS faculty, staff and students, in addition to local community members. It was an intergenerational cultural affair, with attendees ranging from ages 6 to 78 years old. Participants learned about local, statewide and national reparations efforts. They heard a personal story from a Safe Black Space staff member about their connection to the enslavement of their ancestors and current repercussions. Attendees were asked to consider their own family history and experiences and had opportunities to talk and share their stories with each other. They learned tools to cope with racial stress and trauma they may currently be experiencing, as well as identified local resources. Participants experienced a sense of support, community, and pride. Both tears and laughter were shared as Safe Black Space brought people together during this day long circle to liberate and educate about reparations. It provided an opportunity to bring understanding and healing to our local Black community.

The photos below were provided by Safe Black Space as part of their summary report.



5 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Provides a glossary of terms for terms and concepts that may not be commonly understood or should have a shared definition for understanding their use.

Black Americans | (also referred to as **African Americans**) are an ethnic group consisting of Americans with partial or total ancestry from any of the Black racial groups of Africa or the Caribbean. The term African American generally denotes descendants of enslaved Africans brought to the United States.

careholder(s) | this term is being used by the City of Sacramento's Office of Diversity and Equity instead of the term "stakeholder(s)" to be more inclusive and intentional about the way language is used to describe key interests and individuals. A longer description of this term can be found online [here](#) from the Interaction Institute for Social Change.

exclusionary | relating to or characterized by the exclusion of something, especially from a service, policy, contract, or group. For the purposes of this guide, used to describe housing, zoning or economic policy that was deliberately constructed to benefit White Americans by excluding people of color.

harm | a moral and legal concept that can consist of any of the following: physical or emotional pain, death, disability, loss of ability or freedom, or loss of pleasure.

impact | a strong effect on something or someone. For the purposes of this guide, the result of harm.

oppression | prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or control. The systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group.

race | a social construct, not a biological fact. Race is the idea that the human species is divided into distinct groups on the basis of inherited physical and behavioral differences associated with a specific "race". Race designations have changed over time. Some groups that are considered "white" in the United States today were considered "non-white" in previous eras, in U.S. Census data, in mass media, and in popular culture (for example, Irish, Italian, and Jewish people). The way in which racial categorizations are enforced (the shape of racism) has also changed over time. For example, the racial designation of Asian American and Pacific Islander changed four times in the 19th century. That is, they were defined at times as white and at other times as not white.

red lining | The systematic denial of credit, insurance, or loans to particular communities on a discriminatory basis. The term was coined by sociologist James McKnight in the 1960s based on how lenders literally drew a red line on maps around the neighborhoods they would not invest in based on demographics. Black urban neighborhoods were most likely

to be redlined. Investigations found that lenders would make loans to lower-income whites but not to middle- or upper-income African Americans. Examples of redlining can be found in a variety of financial services, including mortgages, student loans, credit cards, and insurance.

redress | remedy or compensation for a wrong or grievance.

repair | the action of fixing or mending something.

restitution | measures intended to restore a survivor to the original situation before the violations occurred, including, as appropriate: restoration of liberty, enjoyment of human rights, identity, family life and citizenship, return to one's place of residence (repatriation), restoration of employment and return of property.

restorative justice | a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by crime and conflict. It places decisions in the hands of those who have been most affected by a wrongdoing, and gives equal concern to the victim, the offender, and the surrounding community. Restorative responses are meant to repair harm, heal broken relationships, and address the underlying reasons for the offense. Restorative justice emphasizes individual and collective accountability.

segregation | the enforced separation of different racial groups in a country, community, or establishment.

survivor | a person who survives, especially a person remaining alive after an event in which others have died or been harmed.

victim | a person harmed, injured, or killed as a result of a crime, accident, or other event or action.

war on drugs | a concerted, militarized campaign led by the United States government to enforce prohibitions on importation, manufacture, use, sale, and distribution of substances deemed to be illegal, advancing a punitive rather than a public health approach to drug use. It is characterized by racial profiling, racially targeted and aggressive policing and prosecutorial practices, long mandatory prison sentences on conviction of drug-related offenses, and a host of collateral consequences to families and communities.

6 ADDENDUM

The addendum compiles copies of presentations, materials, and reports that were given and used during the reparations initiative into one place.

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6.1 RESOLUTION CELEBRATING HISTORIC PASSAGE OF AB3121

Below is the text of the Ceremonial Resolution passed by council on June 15, 2021. A small image capture of the ceremonial resolution as signed by the City Council is also included.

RECOGNIZING HISTORIC PASSAGE OF CALIFORNIA AB 3121

To Establish Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African American Descendants of U.S. Slavery

WHEREAS, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill 3121 signed into law on September 30, 2020. The landmark law sets a historic precedent, making California the first state in the nation to mandate the creation of a nine-person task force to study and develop reparations for African American descendants of U.S slavery; and

WHEREAS, the first meeting of this State Task Force, on June 1, 2021, set the stage for transformative actions acknowledging harms related to the institution of slavery, and identifying ways to repair those harms. This Task Force is charged with identifying federal and state laws that discriminate against African American people and developing proposals to eliminate State policies that continue to discriminate against Black communities. The State Task Force shall recommend a formal apology on behalf of the people of California, recommend remedies to the harms sustained by Black communities, and determine how compensation should be calculated and who is eligible to receive it; and

WHEREAS, The City of Sacramento recognizes the important passage of this significant legislation to study the adverse impacts of slavery, Jim Crow, redlining, black codes, mass incarceration, and subsequent systematic racist policies and systems instituted by law to oppress African American descendants of U.S. slavery. The AB 3121 study is imperative in efforts to establish a federal reparations blueprint to dismantle systemically oppressive systems still widely practiced by institutionalized establishments today; and

WHEREAS, as the state capital, Sacramento shows sincere solidarity in acknowledging AB 3121 as an essential first step towards addressing lasting traumas caused by pervasively present atrocities of slavery in addition to seeking solutions to eradicate racial injustice, discrimination, and tensions through reparatory redress for African American descendants of U.S slavery; and

WHEREAS, the Coalition For A Just & Equitable California (CJEC), a statewide grassroots political coalition, is a compilation of regional reparations advocacy groups statewide and the American Redress Coalition Of California

(ARCC) was integral in efforts to pass AB 3121, including mobilizing call-to-action campaigns, providing testimony in-chamber at hearings, and galvanizing national political support; and

WHEREAS, this momentous achievement acknowledges the need to study reparations for descendants of those enslaved in the U.S. is forever woven into American History. As the City of Sacramento grapples to gradually dismantle its own racist and inequitable systems, the City proudly stakes claim in California's restorative history as the place reparatory justice policy first takes shape.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the City of Sacramento hereby supports the passage of AB 3121 aims and recognizes the work of CJEK, ARCC, and Sacramento organizers ensuring its passage.

ISSUED: June 15, 2021



6.2 STAFF PRESENTATIONS

6.2.1 Witness Testimony to CA Reparations Task Force

At the end of 2022, the Chair of the California Reparations Task Force, Kamilah Moore, invited Mayoral staff to provide witness testimony to Task Force as part of a panel of local municipal reparations efforts. On January 2023, mayoral staff provided virtual witness testimony.

A video recording of the presentation can be viewed online by scrolling to the [3:00:18 timestamp here](#).

The full PowerPoint presentation can be reviewed online [here](#) with one snapshot from it provided below for reference.

EVALUATING OUR ROLE & RESPONSIBILITY

Government is responsible for the allocation of resources and services necessary for human settlement.

Good governance is actively ensuring equitable access to those resources and services.



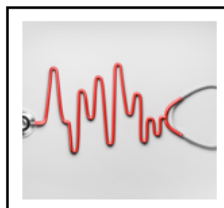
Review

What has the city done to exclude Black residents from access to resources and opportunities through urban planning & design?
Through other policy decisions?



Time

What were specific periods of harm? How have exclusionary practices and decisions impacted our Black businesses, residents, and community over time?



Health

Social determinants of health reveal the symptoms of the impacts that must be addressed but how do we address the root cause to prevent continued and/or future impacts?



Success

What will success look like?
ig: What will it take for Sacramento to improve homeownership for Black residents and for them to feel safe at home?

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6.2.2 GARE 2023 CA convening break-out panel

The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) is a dynamic peer-to-peer learning and practice network dedicated to advancing racial equity in government. The GARE network is driven by the active participation of 13,000+ public stewards, or racial equity practitioners, working in 400+ local, regional, and state GARE member jurisdictions. The City of Sacramento is a member of GARE and staff regularly attend the annual convenings of the full membership as well as regional convenings held every other year.

For the California convening in June 2023, a session proposal from staff was accepted and featured as a break-out session for the convening. The following is the session information as featured at the 2023 GARE California convening followed by a copy of the slidedeck.

Convening Theme Area: Policymaking

Sessions that focus on responsible policymaking, particularly as it relates to the Governor's executive orders, Prop 209, AB 3121 Reparations, or others. We are especially interested in building in meaningful enforcement mechanisms to make policymaking real and accountable to communities.

Session Title:

So, you want to talk about reparations...

Learning Objectives:

The learning objective of this session will be to ground GARE members in key steps and considerations to make any pursuit of reparations at the local level a reparative and accountable process with community members centered in partnership. This includes the concepts of: moving at the speed of trust, a reparative process, and the different roles we play in creating and holding space.

Session Description:

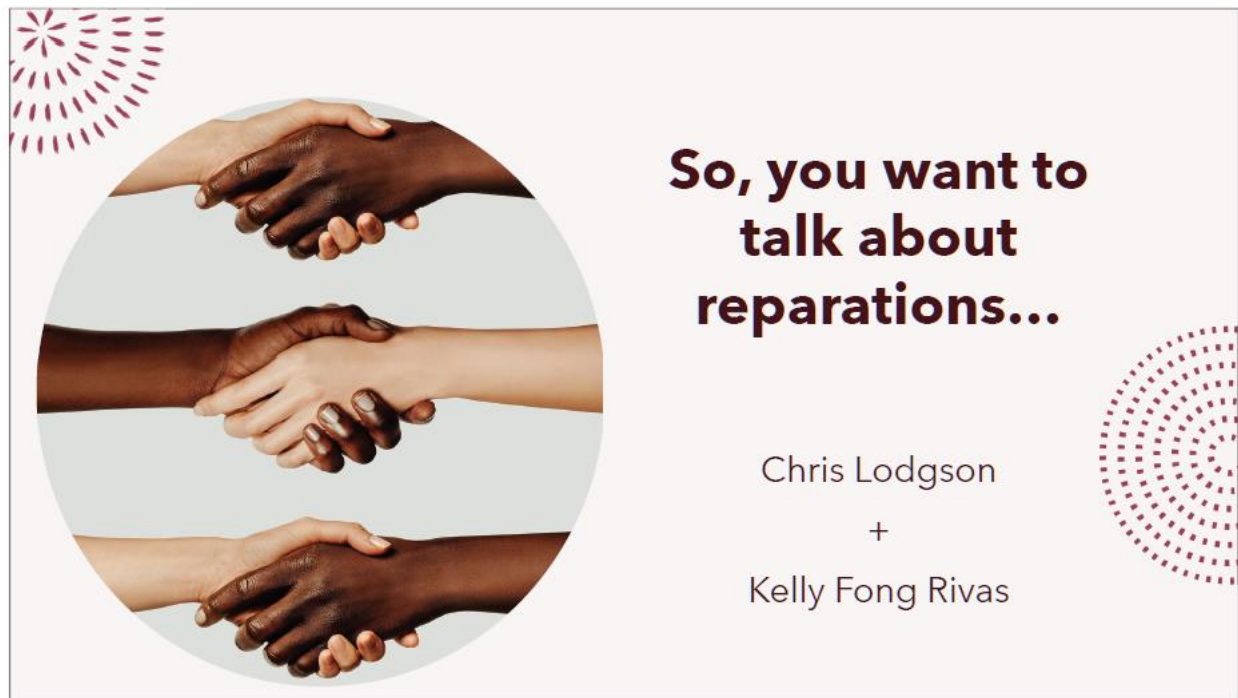
As the AB3121 Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans (California Reparations Task Force) nears the release of its final report by July 1, 2023 and cities across the state and country consider their own reports, commissions, or exploration of reparations – there are key steps, considerations, and lessons emerging from these experiences that should be considered by anyone pursuing reparations.


Chris Lodgson is a community organizer and advocate with the Coalition for a Just and Equitable California (CJEC) which pushed for the California Reparations Task Force and

was one of the seven anchor organizations the Task Force selected to hold public listening sessions across the state. Along with CJEC, Chris has been leading education, engagement, and advocacy efforts around AB3121 and reparations since its inception and has focused on meeting people where they are in community through events, neighborhood canvassing, and online forums.

As the Racial Equity Advisor to the Mayor of Sacramento, Kelly Fong Rivas is tasked with the mayoral initiative of developing municipal reparations for Black Sacramentans. As a white presenting multi-racial representative of government within reparations conferences, hearings, rallies, meet-ups, and conversations across the country – she has observed and learned important distinctions regarding who, what, when, where, why, and how within the work to help build a reparative process that is accountable, legally sound, sustainable, and centers impacted communities.

Together, they are working to shift and increase capacity on all sides towards transformational relationships that build into the movement, not just a moment.





Chris Lodgson (he/him/his)

Comfort Food: baked ziti

On repeat: any/every Black Thought freestyles

Unpopular Opinion: Miami Heat in 7


Mantra: It ain't over until we win

intros

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Kelly Fong Rivas (she/her/hers)

Comfort Food: naw mai fon with gravy
(Cantonese sticky rice with Chinese sausage & mushrooms)

On repeat: "Minimum"
by Charlie Cunningham

Unpopular Opinion: bacon is overrated

Mantra: Figure it out and follow through with the strength of kindness

intros

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Session Overview

Learning Objectives

1. moving at the speed of *trust*
2. building a reparative process
3. different roles we play in creating and holding space



Lay of the Land

1. federal
2. state AB3121
3. local



Reparations

international standard
forms of reparations

1. compensation
2. restitution
3. rehabilitation
4. guarantees of non-repetition
5. satisfaction



What does

*"moving at
the speed of
trust"*

**mean to
you?**

open question to the room

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WHAT DO WE
MEAN BY THIS?



WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN
TERMS OF REPARATIONS?

moving at the speed of T R U S T

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moving at the speed of T R U S T

Trust Gaps

- Long overdue
- First early challenge
- Multiple gaps between and within:
 - Community / public
 - Government
 - Community orgs.
 - Media

Different Speeds

- Careholders* move at different speeds
- Have different pressures
- Momentum / Inertia
- Crises / Complacency
- Urgent needs
- Political constraints

Moving Together

- Open / frequent communication
- Convene / bring together
- Acknowledge may never reach full trust, but commit to always build it
- Demonstrate commitment
Sacramento example

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*Careholders?

*From Stakeholders to
"Careholders"*

August 15, 2022
Curtis Ogden
Interaction Institute for Social Change



NEXT >>

a reparative process...



What do we mean by this?



moving at the speed of trust is a quality of a reparative process



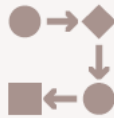
What does it mean in terms of REPARATIONS?

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Why would a reparative process matter?



Isn't it about the outcome?

talk with your neighbor (5 min)



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What does this look like in practice?



"If you have a bad process, you'll probably have a bad outcome"



A reparative process can be thought of as a step towards and practice of *guarantees of non-repetition*

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How do you create it?

Repair is led by
the harmed, not
the perpetrator

Disaggregation
work

*Sacramento
example*

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different roles we play

in creating and holding space



Roles can be defined a few ways...

identity roles

- champions
- supporters
- neutral
- detractors
- opponents

situational roles

- community
- government
- private sector
- public
- media
- academic

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Personally, I feel like my identity role is a...



champion



supporter



neutral



detractor



opponent

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situational roles

- community
- government
- private sector
- public
- media
- academic

**Which role
do you
currently
fit into?**

Open to the room - show of hands

- 1) Do you feel like your identity and situational roles are aligned?
- 2) Do you feel like you and your organization are aligned?

finding & creating alignment

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balancing misalignment

- How do you balance misalignment?
- inwards (within self)
outwards (within groups)
- Dynamic tension is needed for movement - getting comfortable with being uncomfortable...

**Sacramento
examples**

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Learning Objectives

1. moving at the speed of trust
2. building a reparative process
3. different roles we play in creating and holding space

closing recap

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AB3121 - CA Reparations Task Force
9am-5pm | Thursday June 29, 2023

March Fong Eu Secretary of State Building
1500 11th Street, 1st Floor Auditorium
Sacramento, CA 95814



(will also stream live online)

TUNE IN - final hearing

June 15, 2023

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thank you

Chris Lodgson

Chris Lodgson (he/him/his)
cjecofficial@gmail.com

QR code: CJEC website



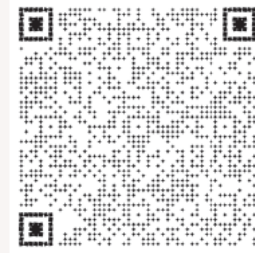
Kelly Fong Rivas

Kelly Fong Rivas (she/her/hers)
KFRivas@cityofsacramento.org

QR code: mayor's website



presentation slides



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6.2.3 *BARHII reparations community of practice*

The following presentation was given to other local governments throughout California working on reparations to provide them with a brief overview of the work and approach Sacramento is taking.



Sacramento – City Level Reparations

Centering community + moving at the speed of trust

Timeline Overview

2021	City Resolution supporting AB 3121 Mayor's Organized for Reparations & Equity Building network + research
2022	Building relationships + bridges Building resources
2023	Building engagement + power
2024	Sustaining + Growing



Building network + research

Community
Local Organizations
State organizations
National organizations
Peers (other cities)
Academic partners
Legal resources
Funding opportunities
Research + reports

local + state + national

What is the current landscape?

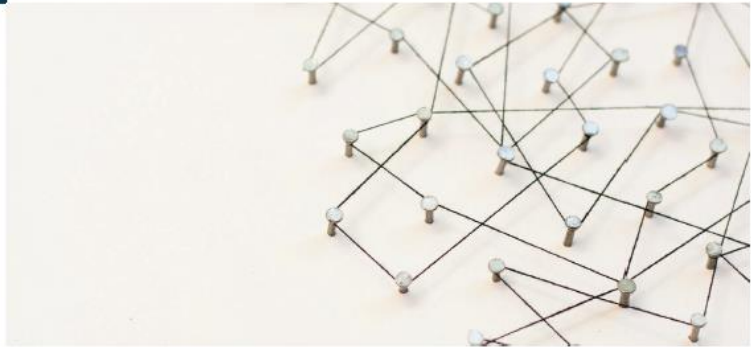
Who is active in the space? *What can we learn from them and/or together?*

What research exists at the local, state, & national level?

What gaps in information / research exist?

What resources are available to support research, engagement, etc.?

What does community want from a local effort?



What we've heard...

The city continues to actively cause harm
you say you support reparations yet your
budget doesn't reflect it Why now?
police are killing us, and you keep
increasing their budget there are no
investments in our neighborhood Why do
you want to do this? What's in your
heart? It's impossible to buy a home
we've told you what we need we don't
trust you We're talking about life & death
here Why isn't this a priority for the city?

truth telling + trust building

center community

Most of our time has been spent learning,
listening, conducting research, securing
resources, and building relationships with and
between community members and groups.





City Level Reparations Community Engagement *NOFA – Grant Opportunity*



One-time grant. Money allocated from a special fund during midyear budget adjustments.

The objectives for this Reparations Community Engagement grant are:

1. To inform community members about city, state, and federal reparations efforts.
2. Collect survey information and feedback from community members to help guide the formation of a city level reparations task force, committee, or commission if there is enough support for one.



Things we've learned

- **HONOR COMMUNITY** - Process itself must be reparative. Pay community members for their participation. Offer support to counter psychological impacts of rehashing trauma. Active partnership
- **HONOR THE WORK** - Take time to establish relationships between members of a task force, allow time together before leadership selections and key decisions are made, provide support
- **BE INTENTIONAL** - Be clear about language and clarify intent for definitions, purpose, and duties of a task force and how/why members are selected
Include representation from whatever legislative body will receive recommendations to ensure commitment & continued work
- **COMMUNICATION IS KEY** - Build in a strong and supported communications arm for the work to ensure thoughtful and creative communication to educate people and counter psychological impacts



6.2.4 UCD student researcher summaries

The following pages contain reports from each of the UC Davis graduate student researchers who spent time digging through city archives, newspapers, and other sources.

The researchers are listed in alphabetical order below with the titles of their reports/summaries as presented. Page numbers are provided below the titles for where to find each report in the addendum.

1. Omari Averette-Phillips | [Jump to report \(6.2.4.1\)](#)

- a. The Afterlives of Redevelopment: A Supplemental Report on West End Redevelopment and Black Community in Oak Park
(Pages 120-126)

2. Taylor Black | [Jump to reports \(6.2.4.2\)](#)

- a. How did municipal policy affect the socio-economic and general livelihood of Black Americans living in the West End of Sacramento before, during, and after the city displaced and redeveloped this area in the mid-to-late 20th Century?
(Pages 127-128)
- b. NAACP Credit Unions and the Struggle Against Market-driven Displacement in Sacramento, 1947-1970
(Pages 129-155)

3. Sareena Crawford | [Jump to report \(6.2.4.3\)](#)

- a. Sacramento Redevelopment and Displacement: Sacramento's Black Community and the Fight Against Segregation (1950-1970)
(Pages 156-218)

4. Chantal Walker | [Jump to reports \(6.2.4.4\)](#)

- a. How has the archival visibility of Black Americans reflected the success of fair and equitable policy in Sacramento in particular and California at large?
(Page 219)

How do historical initiatives, connect with and influence present day endeavors happening in Del Paso Heights to uplift the community and improve living conditions?
(Pages 220-221)
- b. Del Paso Report for Empower 365
(Pages 222-241)

**The Afterlives of Redevelopment: A Supplemental Report on West End
Redevelopment and Black Community in Oak Park**

by: Omari Averette-Phillips

The redevelopment of Sacramento’s West End pushed Black and low-income residents out of the area they had long called home. Oak Park, a neighborhood in Sacramento, quickly rose as an attractive option for a large number of these displaced low-income Black residents to migrate to. The movement of Black residents from the West End to Oak Park in the 1960s transformed the demographics and perception of what had been a majority-white neighborhood. This essay acts as a supplementary report to those created by Sareena Crawford and Taylor Black. Its purpose is to highlight the challenges that existed for displaced Black residents as they settled in Oak Park and to shine a light on the community that rose to address the lack of support. By using newspaper articles produced in the 1950s and 1960s from both the *Sacramento Bee*, and *Sacramento Union*, this essay shows that redevelopment of the West End did not just displace large numbers of Black residents, but that the problems that plagued the West End followed Black people to their new neighborhoods.

Before its incorporation into Sacramento in 1911, the neighborhood of Oak Park was “virtually a city.”¹ What had begun as an area for farmland had, by 1911, transformed into a neighborhood consisting of “two churches, two grade schools, a large pottery works, two lumberyards, a knife-and-tool factory, a large windmill-contracting firm, three plumbing companies, two dry-goods stores, two drugstores, ten groceries, four meat markets, a furniture store, a hotel, a bank, two laundries, and a number of smaller enterprises,” and a population of almost 7,000 residents. Oak Park also boasted a 17-acre amusement park, Joyland, which burned to the ground in 1920 and was never rebuilt. In these early years, Oak Park had a strong community of thousands who helped build the neighborhood into a small city. Many of the houses and businesses in the area were built around 1930 and stood well into the early 1970s.

The community of Oak Park, according to journalist Tom Arden’s 1969 article in *The Sacramento Bee*, became disrupted when “redevelopment in the west end destroyed relatively inexpensive housing for many more low-income Negro families,” and these

¹ Tom Arden, “Once it was Joyland...,” *The Sacramento Bee*, September, 28, 1969, 8.

families then sought to settle in Oak Park. While Black residents had moved into Oak Park during World War II, Arden assures his readers that these Black people—who had moved to Oak Park looking for jobs during the war effort—were “easily absorbed by Oak Park.” There was something different about the overwhelming number of Black residents coming from the West End, however.

The demographics of Oak Park changed quickly during the redevelopment period. Arden cites statistics from the 1960 and 1964 census showing that in 1960, Oak Park contained 10,475 white people and 3,708 Black people. By 1964, the area was home to 5,482 Black people and 7,032 whites. According to Arden—with a sentiment that was echoed by white residents—the increasing Black population led to a precipitous slide into the neighborhood becoming “a ghetto.”² With the newly displaced Black residents came “a police problem,” and outsiders began to “fear going into the area.” This resulted in businesses leaving the neighborhood. Arden highlights this by focusing on the closure of Steen’s Corner, a tavern that had been in Oak Park since 1892.³ Arden and the residents of Oak Park saw this decline as the “slum spiral,” with much of the blame laid at the feet of the newly arrived Black residents.

This correlation between Black people and crime was not new in the 1950s and 1960s but was aided in the Oak Park area by the perception of residents in the West End. As James Michael Williams writes, “[w]ithin the West End was the Sacramento’s skid row area, an economically depressed district of inexpensive hotels that was historically home to thousands of single, male, transient agricultural workers.” The Skid Row area of the West End then had a reputation for being the “poorest, dirtiest, most dangerous section of the city,” made up almost exclusively of non-white residents.⁴ This fear of displaced Black residents bringing crime from the West End was further fanned in numerous newspaper articles. In an October 1954 article—part of a series of reports on the West End during redevelopment—Tom Evans took a “view from the street” to highlight the culture of the West End. Evans highlights the “shocking but commonplace sights” in the area. The West End was full of bars, card rooms, and pool halls. Those establishments provided the only indoor seating in the area. Outdoor seating was mostly reserved to sidewalks. Once outside Evans recounts his time observing people smoking and drinking in public, drunk

² *ibid.*

³ *ibid*; Fred Steen the owner of Steen’s corner is quoted in the article as stating that he was closing his tavern because “my customers are no longer safe to walk to streets of this area.”

⁴ James Michael Williams, “West End Boys: Urban Redevelopment and the Elimination of Sacramento’s Skid Row,” Master’s Thesis, (California State University, Sacramento, 2013), 2.

individuals arguing with each other, and noise pollution in the form of “boogie-woogie” being played on pianos in churches.⁵

Residents of the West End were not the only inhabitants of the area that were displaced, businesses were as well. In another piece from April 1960, focusing on the redevelopment area, Edward Meagher of *The Sacramento Bee* spoke to business owners about the troubles they faced as their clientele was displaced. The article contains interviews with a number of business owners in the West End including: Leon David of the Gold Nugget Card Room and Restaurant, Abdul Rahim of the Central Hotel, Joe Osuga of Fairmont Cleaners, and Joe Davis who owned a number of stores in the redevelopment area.⁶ Joe Davis specifically is quoted in the article stating that he moved one of his clothing stores to Oak Park.⁷ Joe Osuga, moved the Fairmont Cleaners outside of the redevelopment area—from 419 P St. to 511 Broadway.⁸ In 1968, Leon David also moved the Gold Nugget Card Room and Restaurant outside of the redevelopment area—from 1021 6th St. to 719 12th St. David spoke about the hardship that redevelopment placed on his business, namely that he needed to be “close to the people who keep us going—the single working men, not the vagrants.”⁹ The Central Hotel, owned by Abdul Rahim also seemed to be a casualty of redevelopment, either by losing its clientele or not being able to reopen after moving. The Central Hotel is listed in the Negro Motorists’ Green Book—books produced for Black travelers to help them find places to stay during the Jim Crow era and times of racial segregation—as early as 1952, but by the 1961 Green Book, just a year after Meagher’s article was published, it seems to have disappeared.

In October of 1954, just after his “View from the Street” article, Tom Evans of *The Sacramento Union* returned to the West End, to argue that no one really wanted to live there. In an article titled, “WEST END: Families Living in Squalid Area Would Much Prefer To

⁵ Tom Evans, “WEST END: Sidewalk Sitting Will Provide View of Shocking But Commonplace Sights,” *The Sacramento Union*, October 18, 1954, 9.

⁶ Edward F. Meagher, “Redevelopment Closes Many West End Businesses; Others Move to Nearby Sites,” *The Sacramento Bee*, April, 04, 1960, D-1.

⁷ The process of trying to find more information on Joe Davis and his clothing store in Oak Park is difficult. Joe Davis’ name is quite generic, not to mention that there was a star high school running back in the Sacramento area around the same time period with the same name. The name of Davis’ clothing store is also not mentioned at any point during the article. To find more information, business and property records would most likely need to be consulted.

⁸ “Fairmont Cleaners,” *The Sacramento Union*, June 10, 1957, 12 ; this shows where the Fairmont Cleaners was previously located.

⁹ Edward F. Meagher, “Redevelopment Closes Many West End Businesses; Others Move to Nearby Sites,” *The Sacramento Bee*, April, 04, 1960, D-1 ; “Safe is Robbed Of About \$10,000,” *The Sacramento Bee*, June 18, 1968, 14. In this article Peter Mikacich is named as “one of the owners of the Gold Nugget Card Room and Restaurant.” It is unclear if Leon David sold the Card Room or if he was still one of the owners in 1968.

Be Living Elsewhere,” Evans interviewed a Black couple, James & Harriet Doe—most likely not their actual surname—who lived in the Capitol Mall Project Area. The Does lived in an alley home—described by Evans as “typical, neither the best nor the worst,” with their five children. Mrs. Doe is quoted in the piece, stating that she was “glad they’re going to do something,” when it came to redevelopment. The Does qualified for priority on vacancies in public housing “South of Broadway.” Further, the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency is quoted as showing “that there will be more than enough vacancies in the two-year relocation period to accommodate those expected to seek these facilities.” It is not clear if the housing referenced in this article ever materialized. Further research on this topic is needed to see if this falls into one of the broken promises from the City of Sacramento Government toward Black West End residents that has been researched by Taylor Black and Omari Averette-Phillips.¹⁰ It is possible—and, perhaps, highly likely—that the Does ended up like so many others displaced from the West End and relocated to Oak Park. Once relocated to Oak Park, Tom Arden and the residents of the neighborhood would have us believe that these displaced Black residents created a slum in the neighborhood. While Oak Park did not retain its turn-of-the-century small-town charm, the incoming Black residents were not without a community of their own. Some sought to turn what was viewed as a negative into a positive.

One such individual was W. Ray White, a teacher in Oak Park. In an article written by *The Sacramento Bee*’s George Williams, White, a former member of the US airforce turned teacher, sought to turn the idea of a ghetto on its head by asking “[w]hat’s wrong with a ghetto?”¹¹ White’s definition of a ghetto—that is “a neighborhood dominated by the culture of an ethnic group,” in which he likens Oak Park to San Francisco’s China Town—differed from the negative connotation placed on it by Tom Arden in his 1969 article—“a neighborhood without an exit.”¹² White’s positive spin on the concept of a ghetto fit well with his belief in what Oak Park could become by embracing the culture of its most populace ethnicity. White believed that Oak Park could be developed into “a showplace for events emphasizing the culture of the predominant ethnic group in that neighborhood—Negro Culture.” White saw an urgency in this development as he worried about the young Black people in his community. Specifically, White was concerned with young Black people becoming “impatient with the treatment they receive[d] from the police.” White

¹⁰ Research can found in Omari Averette-Phillips & Taylor Black, “Research Report for Sacramento Reparations Projection - Phase I,” Research project, University of California, Davis, 2022.

¹¹ George Williams, “Teacher Says Oak Park Could Capitalize on Role,” *The Sacramento Bee*, June 22, 1967, 1.

¹² Tom Arden, “Once it was Joyland...,” *The Sacramento Bee*, September, 28, 1969, 8.

quoted one youth as saying “I’m getting my head beat in for doing nothing,” he continued, “[w]hy not get it beat in for doing something?”¹³

Indeed, altercations between young minorities and the police were of major concern for communities between the late 1960s and early 1970s. As historian Elizabeth Hinton shows in her work, *America on Fire: The Untold History of Police Violence and Black Rebellion Since the 1960s*, the impetus for many urban riots—or uprisings—during this time period was police action against young Black and Brown children. The communities that cared for these children then became, to borrow White’s phrase, impatient with their treatment and lashed back out at what they viewed as unjust treatment. To try to stem this impatience in Oak Park, the Black community took up many different strategies.

One strategy, which Hinton shows often accompanied uprisings, was to call for funding for programs for youth. This call, undoubtedly, went out several times but reached the pages of *The Sacramento Bee* in June of 1967. This particular push for recreational programs and equipment was led by the biracial pastoral team at the First English Lutheran Church of Oak Park—the only church in Sacramento at the time with white and Black pastorship—Reverends Melvin C. Langeland and Cyril A Lucas.¹⁴ Tying recreational equipment to the cost of policing, Langeland argues that “[t]he amount of money that it would take to replace the window of a police patrol car could be used for a swing in a playground or the start of a basketball court.” Langeland and Lucas point to the influx of Black residents to Oak Park from displacement in Sacramento and highlight the high rents in the area and the substandard condition of these residences. These combined stressors—displacement, and substandard living arrangements—helped to create the “impatience” that W. Ray White alluded to. As such, Langeland and Lucas made it very clear that they firmly believed that young people in the community needed distractions. These distractions in the form of investments in recreational programs and equipment could transform the community and save lives—be it those of young people or even police officers.

A second strategy was to ease economic stressors by providing jobs. In 1967, a group of five Oak Park businessmen—all of them white except for one Black member—endorsed a proposal to “take young people into their stores as trainees in conjunction with the federal antipoverty program to prepare them for eventual employment in Oak Park.”¹⁵

¹³ George Williams, “Teacher Says Oak Park Could Capitalize on Role,” *The Sacramento Bee*, June 22, 1967, 1.

¹⁴ George Williams, “Youth Recreation Facilities Could Change Many Lives,” *The Sacramento Bee*, June 21, 1967, 1.

¹⁵ George Williams, “Oak Park Group Offers Job Aid,” *The Sacramento Bee*, September 3, 1967, 29.

The businessmen sought to use antipoverty funding to “create three-month programs to teach Oak Park youngsters the fundamentals of running a small business,” in hopes that the youth would have jobs and eventually create businesses in the Oak Park area themselves. This group of businessmen, who collectively had over 100 years of experience in the community, sought to show through this initiative that the “Negroes of Oak Park are good people,” and further that the “small percentage” of those that were involved in “trouble” did not “represent Oak Park.”¹⁶

Another strategy taken by the Black Community to ease tensions was to create a patrol of their own. The Community Alert Patrol (CAP), as it was known, was created by the Oak Park Action and Service Group—a Black community organization in Oak Park. CAP was a patrol organized in order to “offset rumbles of trouble brewing, gang fights and property damage, thereby reducing the need for police in such cases.” The purpose of the CAP as stated by Mary Holma—the chairperson of the Oak Park Action and Service Group—was to “relax tensions in the Oak Park area between residents and the members of the Sacramento Police Department.”¹⁷ Further, CAP was to “observe the actions of citizens and police in an effort to ascertain validity of charges of police brutality.” To achieve this, CAP was to employ students and ministers—two very important stakeholders in the tension between the community and police—who would carry cameras and tape-recorders and would follow the police “in their neighborhood to make a record of possible unlawful practices.” The Oak Park Action and Service Group essentially created a patrol made up of community members to monitor the community in hopes of disturbing the patterns of conflict that existed between the community and the police and to validate claims of police brutality. By implementing this action and involving invested stakeholders, CAP intended to give the community a chance to engage directly with a problem in a way that did not involve violence or reinforce a stereotype of their neighborhood.¹⁸

The Black community of Oak Park sought to create a home in the Oak Park neighborhood. Many, having been displaced from what they knew in the West End, found the criminalization and lack of opportunities followed them to their new home which—because of the increased presence of members of the race—was now being referred to as a “ghetto,” a “slum,” and being overpoliced. Rather than simply standing by and allowing this to happen, however, the community got to work trying to find solutions that could change the reality for the community and especially for Black youth. The actions found in the newspaper articles that form the basis of this essay are not the entire story of the Black

¹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁷ “Oak Park Group Forms Community Alert Patrol,” *The Sacramento Bee*, June 20, 1967, 4.

¹⁸ *ibid.*

community of Oak Park, though it does show us something of the afterlife of redevelopment of Sacramento's West End. The story for the Black former residents of the West End did not end with their displacement from that "ghetto," but rather the belief that the ghetto was not geographically bound—that is, the ghetto was not the West End—but rather that they were the ghetto and carried that with them—discrimination and lack of resources and all—with them wherever they may roam.

There are many further directions that research can take to fully understand the impact of displacement on former residents of the West End. For example: How did the redevelopment of the West End displace Black residents? Where were these Black residents displaced to? What traces can we find of Black residents who were displaced to Oak Park and Del Paso Heights? How did this displacement affect businesses and laborers in the West End? Sacramento Redevelopment Agency is quoted as showing "that there will be more than enough vacancies in the two-year relocation period to accommodate those expected to seek these facilities." Is the lack of this happening a possible connection to housing discrimination? Can we find a follow-up on James & Harriet Doe? Do they get to move into housing promised by the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency? Further, does the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency move those displaced by redevelopment into public housing south of Broadway? If so, how many, and what are their stories? What more can be found about Mary Holman and the Oak Park Action Service Group's actions? Answers to these questions can help us to more fully understand the experiences of former residents of the West End after displacement.

How did municipal policy affect the socio-economic and general livelihood of Black Americans living in the West End of Sacramento before, during, and after the city displaced and redeveloped this area in the mid-to-late 20th Century?

By: Taylor Black

This research explored the impact of municipal policy on the African American community in the West End of downtown Sacramento during the redevelopment period in the 1950s and 1960s. I maintain that a lack of anti-racist policy—more than the policies in place—resulted in persistent racial discrimination, especially in the housing sector after 1954. These policies hindered Black Sacramento residents’ and business owners’ ability to accumulate capital in property after the city displaced their community. First, a war between the interests of real estate companies, politicians, and residents unfolded in the city council meetings and courts of law from April to October 1954. Due to the efforts of the NAACP and attorney Nathaniel S. Colley, the city implemented several measures to win the NAACP’s support of the redevelopment of the West End in 1954. However, these measures—which included creating a Relocation Committee, adding an equal rights clause in the redevelopment plans, and a six-point policy statement for economic reparations—were ultimately ineffective in protecting Black people’s socio-economic interests because they never became laws.

1. Consequently, many Black businesses were displaced or forced to relocate due to the fact that their main clientele were also displaced and scattered to other districts in the city.
2. I have verified that a large portion of these business owners opened court cases in the late 1950s and 1960s (highlighted)*.
3. My goal was to see if any of these business owners opened lawsuits that appealed to the six point policy statement made by acting Mayor Hendren in the 1954 redevelopment plan proceedings. This policy aimed to ensure that “the cost of redevelopment did not fall unfairly on certain business owners in the West End while benefitting the entire city.”
4. I was unable to verify how effective this was before leaving the project, but Colley’s records indicate these businesses did in fact bear the economic burden while the city benefitted.
5. In conclusion, the city’s ultimate commitment to redevelopment for the purpose of capital production contradicted missions to protect the socio-economic interests of Black residents in the West End. Colley published an essay detailing the struggles for racial equality in the housing sector tracing back to 1900. He showed how this battle played out

in the courts and highlighted how real-estate developers consistently argued they had a “right to discriminate” in the name of private property law. Moreover, the displacement and absence of people of color directly raised the value of property in Sacramento.

6. In practice, this meant that city officials paid lip service to ideals of racial equity but struggled to make these promises real because of this conflict of interest. Their unwillingness to redevelop around ideals of community development grounded in racial equity rather than maximizing capital production in a racist society had a lasting impact on the ability of displaced Black residents in the West End to accumulate wealth in property.

The Greater Sacramento Urban League featured the this summary in its 2023 Impact report which can be viewed [online here](#).

NAACP Credit Unions and the Struggle Against Market-driven Displacement in Sacramento, 1947- 1970

By Taylor Black

For the Sacramento Reparations Project

August 2024

III
WORKER'S SONG

(Tune: We've been Working on the
Railroad)

We are working for our country
All the livelong day;
We are working to get justice
To drive Jim Crow Away;
Come and help us in the struggle
To make America Free;
From the foe--Discrimination--
So pay your joining fee.

An NAACP Pep Song circa 1950¹⁹

¹⁹ "Pep Songs for the NAACP," Bancroft Library Special Collections, BANC MSS 78/180c, Carton 90, Folder 9

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I. Introduction: Imperium in Imperio

“The credit union is our means for achieving economic democracy”

-Robert M. Patterson, President
of the NAACP’s St. Paul
Branch.²⁰

This report showcases the NAACP’s Credit Union movement, the most critical effort in the 1950s and 60s to imagine and construct an equitable future for African Americans in the city of Sacramento. I argue that the story of the NAACP credit unions functioned like an capitalist imperium in imperio.²¹ That is to say the NAACP credit unions functioned as a sort of financial “empire” within the larger U.S. political economic empire. Or, better yet, a distinct yet interconnected economic apparatus within a larger U.S. economic apparatus whose terms of business, interests, and profits remained inextricably linked to racecraft²² in the post-WWII era. When we consider how the NAACP built their own autonomous network of economic credit by people of color for people of color, we gain a deeper appreciation for how and why they were able to have many economic successes while failing to change the racist logics and discriminatory practices built into the housing market and political-economic system in Sacramento and the

²⁰ “NAACP Credit Unions,” *Credit Union Bridge Magazine*, March 1963. Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection, Carton 7: Folder 3.

²¹ Here I am building on a concept that novelist and intellectual Suttan E. Griggs constructed at the turn of the century to describe the paradoxes and dilemmas defining the Black experience in the USA writ large. As the USA turned to increasingly imperialist policies, Griggs wrote about how Black Americans were forced to confront whether it was more beneficial to integrate themselves into such a system or to separate themselves autonomously as they built their own Black imperial state within. See Griggs *Imperium in Imperio*, Cincinnati: The Editor Publishing Co. 1899.

²² This term refers to the specific concept laid out in the work of Barbara Fields. It concerns the origins and production of race and racism in the United States across space and time. See Barbara Jeanne Fields, “Slavery, Race And Ideology In The United States Of America” in the *New Left Review*: <https://newleftreview.org/issues/il81/articles/barbara-jeanne-fields-slavery-race-and-ideology-in-the-united-states-of-america>.

nation-state more broadly. The NAACP Credit Unions were critical for building a Black middle-upper class in the USA as the federal government implemented new redevelopment programs for cities across the nation.

This movement began in Sacramento in 1949 as an effort to create financial autonomy for Black Sacramentans when the state was empowering banks and realtors to discriminate against people of color with impunity. NAACP leaders quickly expanded the credit union network across the U.S. and eventually across the Atlantic to parts of West Africa. Many believed what Robert M. Patterson the President of the St. Paul Credit Union Branch declared in 1963: “the credit union is our means for achieving economic democracy.”²³ In an economy owned largely by wealthy white men, and shaped by wealthy white interests, Black community leaders strived to create a separate network of credit defined by democratic values against the system that capitalized on racism while moving to maximize profits.

Sacramento has a long, well-researched history of housing segregation, racism, and redlining. These conflicts have characterized both its redevelopment at various stages and its movements of resistance.²⁴ For decades the NAACP fought against racist legislation in the housing market that empowered realtors, banks, and wealthy homeowners to discriminate against potential buyers based on skin color and other social factors. But if these legal battles sought to negate the technologies of racecraft that oppressed communities of color, this research maintains that the credit union movement represented something wholly positive. It was a movement to imagine and construct new futures and financial technologies by people of color for people of color that would empower them by giving them tools needed for socio-economic autonomy once legal protections were won. On the one hand this movement was very successful in that it granted thousands of people of color access to financial loans and life insurance across the country, but it was inherently limited as a distinct network of Black credit subsumed in a U.S. capitalist empire. The story of Sacramento’s redevelopment shows how racist logic structured economic value of property in Sacramento’s redevelopment. Race, and the displacement of communities of color, especially African Americans, was the foundational component in the initial production of value and then capital when it came to repurposing the West End. The city created a new bond system where it leveraged bonds against the increased property value that would occur once the city razed the Black communities living there and

²³ “NAACP Credit Unions,” *Credit Union Bridge Magazine*, March 1963. Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection, Carton 7: Folder 3.

²⁴ For a recent synthesis on redlining and housing segregation see, Damany Morris Fisher, “History Matters: Realities of Redlining in Sacramento,” *Faith Made Flesh: The Black Child Legacy Campaign for Transformative Justice and Healthy Futures*, Cornell University Press (2023), 26-50. Also see Fisher, “Far From Utopia: Race, Housing, and the Fight to End Residential Segregation in Sacramento, 1900-1980.” PhD dissertation. University of California, Berkeley, 2008.

repurposed the space for capitalist development controlled by white realtors, developers, and politicians in the 1950s and 1960s. Moreover, realtors were not shy in expressing to the public how critical housing segregation was *for property values* in that racist economic market. This was not an economic truth or law, but a socially driven system of capital production. In short, the NAACP and its credit unions faced the daunting task of creating a parallel credit apparatus for people of color within such a political economy whose precondition for capitalist production was inextricably linked to the crafting of racial identities and hierarchies of value.

II. Historical Context of the NAACP Credit Unions

“All citizens of the United States shall have the same right in every State and territory, as is enjoyed by white citizens thereof to inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold and convey real personal property.”

-Civil Rights Act, 1866

When the NAACP created the credit union movement in Sacramento in the late 1940s, Black residents of Sacramento faced a highly discriminatory housing system, predatory banks and loan agreements, and other forms of violence that inhibited their ability to choose where and how they wished to live.²⁵ In many ways, the federal state shaped who had access to mortgage credit through loan guarantees and insurance, secondary markets, and other regulatory mechanisms as recent scholarship has shown.²⁶ However, many local dynamics also played an important role in the discriminatory process the government facilitated. Nathaniel Colley, one of the first and most prominent Black lawyers in California history who fought for Black Sacramento residents and worked as a leader of the NAACP

²⁵ “Sacramento Metropolitan Area Housing Trends,” 1964. UC Davis Special Collections. For more on housing segregation in Sacramento see “Far From Utopia: Race, Housing, and the Fight to End Residential Segregation in Sacramento, 1900-1980.” PhD dissertation. University of California, Berkeley, 2008; Page and Turnbull “Sacramento African American Experience History Project Historic Context Statement.” April 2023. For the national context of housing segregation in the 1940s and 1950s see Chloe Thurston, *At the Boundaries of Homeownership: Credit, Discrimination and the American State*, 2018; Rothstein, Richard, *The Color Of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*. Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2017; Flanagan, Richard M., “The Housing Act of 1954: The Sea Change in National Urban Policy.” *Urban Affairs Review*, Vol. 33, No. 2, 1997, 265-286.

²⁶ See Chloe Thurston, *At the Boundaries of Homeownership: Credit, Discrimination and the American State*, 2018. Thurston argues that by identifying this role of exclusion on the part of the govt, Black women highlighted the potential for the govt to make inclusive policies and a responsibility on the part of the govt to make sure that private sectors did the same.

for decades, himself filed a lawsuit for being inhibited from buying a house in Sacramento on the basis of his skin color when he and his spouse Jerlean Colley moved there from Alabama in 1948.²⁷ These socio-economic struggles grounded in the housing market and connected to Labor struggles prompted the NAACP to create economic institutions designed to provide mortgage credit, loans, financial education and life insurance to the African American community long term. To understand why this took place, we must briefly consider the historical roots of discrimination in the realm of private property ownership.

Civil Rights Act of 1866

Sacramento's discriminatory housing economy in the 1950s had deep historical roots in the post-emancipation struggle for equality. After the state abolished slavery via the 13th Amendment in 1865, questions about labor, social equality, and citizenship created new conflicts regarding state enforcement across the United States. One of the most crucial pieces of legislation for the early Reconstruction period was the Civil Rights Act of 1866, specifically the 42 U.S. Code § 1982 titled "Property rights of citizens." Indeed, this act attempted to create equal access to land *and* personal property after slavery (e.g. housing) *through* a racial framework, before the 14th Amendment ever established birthright citizenship or articulated a legal language of equality to protect freedpeople from discrimination. The act mandated that "all citizens have the same right in every State and territory, *as is enjoyed by white citizens thereof* to inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold and convey real personal property."²⁸ In short, the act placed full access to property and its markets at the center of post-emancipation debates over equality and it empowered the federal government like never before to enforce this form of equality against private interests.

Nathaniel Colley knew this history of post-emancipation struggles for property access well. When he produced a report in the 1960s with attorney Loren Miller on the struggles of housing discrimination in the USA, his thesis hinged on how reactionaries had turned the Civil Rights Act on its head in the 1870s:

It has been held that this state law prohibits state action only, even though the truth of the matter is that [the Civil Rights Act of 1866's] language makes no reference to state action, and it was first enacted prior to the Fourteenth Amendment. Originally at least, this statute was

²⁷ For a brief biography, see <https://colley.omeka.net/exhibits/show/theciviclfe/husbandandfather>.

²⁸ See Nathaniel S. Colley and Loren Miller, "Statutory and Judicial Enforcement of the Right to Housing," Bancroft Library Special Collections, Berkeley, CA, [NAACP, Region I, Records 1942-1986](#), Collection Number BANC MSS 78/180 c.

designed to effectuate the purpose of the Thirteenth Amendment forbidding slavery. Congress recognized that inability to own real property was one of the incidents of slavery, and hence this statute was in reality *an antislavery measure* (Emphasis added)²⁹

For Colley, the housing issues in Sacramento in the 1950s and 60s were a direct product of this antislavery law's misuse. Andrew Johnson revoked the land redistribution initiative in South Carolina for freedpeople.³⁰ And, as Colley also pointed out, conservative reactionaries quickly turned this act into a precedent for empowering individuals with the personal right to “choose” with whom and how to invest. In short, reactionaries in the housing market turned this act and its subsequent legislation into the very thing it was meant to prevent—the private power to discriminate based on race.

The issue of property and markets in the turn toward a post-emancipation U.S.A. was not simply about property and markets. It was actually about who would own and wield capital *in* the market and thereby define values within it. Whoever wielded the power of capital-surplus production would over time determine the value of properties, houses, the trajectory of the economy and its purpose in U.S.A. society. However, if the issue was economic in form, the stakes were social in nature. Therefore, when Johnson returned the property to what-were slaveholding traitors and the courts reversed the effects of the 42 U.S. Code § 1982 titled “Property rights of citizens,” this shaped the political economic trajectory of the United States and secured white racists’ ability to maintain their hold on the means of capital-surplus production. In short, they controlled the economy and forms of economic value that drove it for the years to come.³¹

The issue of state enforcement and equal protection of rights defined Colley’s 1960s report. The most crucial issue since slavery in the struggle for equality had been a misappropriation of state action by state courts. He argued

²⁹ Nathaniel S. Colley and Loren Miller, “Statutory and Judicial Enforcement of the Right to Housing,” Bancroft Library Special Collections, Berkeley, CA, [NAACP, Region I, Records 1942-1986](#), Collection Number BANC MSS 78/180 c.

³⁰ Eric Foner has a useful synopsis of Johnson’s person and his impact as President on this issue in “The Failure of Reconstruction,” in *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution 1863-1877*, Harper and Row Publishers, 1988.

³¹ Some scholars have been employing a framework of “racial capitalism” to describe how developments after slavery led to new forms of oppression and unfreedom in the era of post-emancipation capitalism. The scholarship is vast but Justin Leroy has a useful synopsis of this framework for history here: Leroy, Justin. “Racial Capitalism and Black Philosophies of History” in Leroy, Justin and Jenkins, Destin. *Histories of Racial Capitalism*, New York Chichester, West Sussex: Columbia University Press, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.7312/jenk19074>.

that state courts had “become confused by the misreading of civil rights cases, 109 U.S. 3, which held that congress could not interdict individual action and that the impact of the Fourteenth Amendment was to prohibit state action which was discriminatory.”³² The Civil Rights cases, he stated, “do not hold that there is a federally protected ‘right to discriminate’” On the contrary, “the state is free to interdict any discrimination which it may single out.” So why and how did an anti-slavery Civil Rights Act of 1866, originally created to protect Black people’s equal rights to property and economic exchange, come to enlist the power of the state to protect the interests of a white capitalist class at the expense of those freed people’s future generations? The question is gigantic. But what is more manageable is the impact this development had on the housing market well into the 20th century.

In the 1940s, the Supreme Court maintained many of the same precedents set by the courts in Reconstruction regarding the freedom of individuals as economic agents in the housing market to determine who and how to sell their property without government intervention. In 1948, the Supreme Court ruled that racial clauses in deeds and mutual agreements on housing could *not* depend on government enforcement precisely because these were “private agreements.”³³ Indeed, the Court “repudiated its 1926 endorsement of restrictive covenants and acknowledged that enforcement by state courts was unconstitutional.”³⁴ However, the FHA continued to enforce these racial clauses for a decade. As Adam Rothstein shows, from 1937 to 1948 in Los Angeles alone, there were over 100 lawsuits to evict African Americans who violated “race covenants” in the housing market. In 1947, an African American man was jailed after taking a lease against a race covenant in the area in question.³⁵ Thus, before the FHA sponsored whites only suburbanization the housing situation in the United States was already largely segregated. The federal statute of 1948 may have removed the state-sanctioned “right” to discriminate, but it did nothing to prevent people from doing it anyway.

It was in such a context that the NAACP initiated its first credit union program. This decision both embraced the capitalist system they found themselves in and strove for an alternative vision and economic trajectory to the

³²See page 3 in Nathaniel S. Colley and Loren Miller, “Statutory and Judicial Enforcement of the Right to Housing,” Bancroft Library Special Collections, Berkeley, CA, [NAACP, Region I, Records 1942-1986](#), Collection Number BANC MSS 78/180 c.

³³ See Rothstein, “The Color of Law,” 54-56.

³⁴ Rothstein, “The Color of Law,” 58.

³⁵ Rothstein, “The Color of Law,” 56. Also see “Far From Utopia: Race, Housing, and the Fight to End Residential Segregation in Sacramento, 1900-1980.” PhD dissertation. University of California, Berkeley, 2008. 150-160.

one that developed during the struggle over equality in Reconstruction during the nineteenth century.

III. NAACP Credit Unions—An Alternative Vision for a Black Future in Sacramento and Beyond

“We [NAACP Credit Unions] are not internationally known for our size and dollar assets, but for the nature of our mission”

-Virna Canson³⁶

Virna Canson

In 1963 Treasurer-Manager Virna Canson of the NAACP Sacramento Credit Union declared to its leadership “We are the NEW FRONTIER for NAACP” (Emphasis original). The Sacramento branch, established in 1949, was the oldest and largest credit union in the NAACP. The NAACP, as Canson’s words suggest, had come to represent for many African Americans the way forward in a capitalist country where access to loans, lines of credit, life insurance, and affordable housing were essential for a semblance of stability and communal growth.

The NAACP clearly stated their purposes in their bylaws adopted February 10, 1949. They were recorded as follows:³⁷

1. To further the aims and objectives of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People;
2. To promote thrift, honesty, integrity, business methods, and the spirit of service among its members;
3. To receive money from members for the purchase of shares and certificates for funds;
4. To make loans to its members for provident purposes at reasonable rates of interest;
5. To make loans to other credit unions;
6. To borrow money from any source in an amount not to exceed that permitted by the California Credit Union Law;
7. To associate and cooperate with other credit unions.

³⁶ Virna Canson Letter, “The Road Ahead for the NAACP Credit Union”, Bancroft Library Special Collections, Berkeley California BANC MSSS 78/180c.

³⁷ See “Bylaws of Sacramento Branch NAACP Credit Union”, Bancroft Library Special Collections, Berkeley, CA. BANC MSSS 78/180c, Carton 90, Folder 11.

By the 1950s, many Black Sacramentans had grown skeptical of banks, mortgage loans, and the people who promoted them. For years, loan sharks had exploited both the social and economic positions of many Sacramento residents to the point that they had cut out the idea of loans as an option in many cases.³⁸ The NAACP credit unions revived this opportunity for many residents of color. However, if it had not been for leaders like Canson, it is likely that this skepticism would have tanked the credit unions before they got off the ground. From 1955 to 1964 the Sacramento branch steadily increased its membership from 467 accounts to over 1500 accounts.³⁹ But by 1963, the Sacramento Credit Union and the NAACP Credit Unions in general turned to longterm questions about growth. In her letter to the Credit Union Board and Committee, Canson stated, “We..face the problems and challenges of growth. We have come from a small, unknown credit union of \$72.00 in assets to an internationally known credit union of some \$400,000.00.” It was leaders like Canson that cast and then maintained the vision of the credit union as economic and social problems evolved in the United States into the 1960s.

Canson articulated a vision of the Credit Union purpose that built on the Labor struggle of the early 20th century that fought for the increase in wages, fringe benefits, and for decent working conditions. In 1963 she proclaimed to the Union members, “It has won this for its members, but in their taking a second look it finds that somewhere along the line those for whom it has struggled have not been taught to make the best use of these gains.”⁴⁰ In Sacramento, Canson and others formed an education committee dedicated to spreading literature and hosting events designed to raise financial literacy amongst their members. These efforts were intertwined with other communal institutions such as churches and colleges. However, Cansons reported that “We feel that all except one of our educational efforts have brought good results...our series of letters to church members and college professors. Somehow, we failed there to arouse the response for which we had hoped.”⁴¹

³⁸ See Virna Canson and Nathaniel Colley Letter to Members on Delinquency, May 18, 1964. Carton 7, Folder 4.

³⁹ See “Financial and Statistical Report: Sacramento Branch, 1955,” Carton 90, Folder 11; Sacramento Branch Credit Union Financial and Statistical Report, Aug 31, 1962. Carton 7, Folder 2.

⁴⁰ Virna Canson Letter, “The Road Ahead for the NAACP Credit Union”, Bancroft Library Special Collections, Berkeley California BANC MSSS 78/180c.

⁴¹ “NAACP Credit Unions,” *Credit Union Bridge Magazine*, March 1963. Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection, Carton 7: Folder 3. Also see See Virna Canson and Nathaniel Colley Letter to Members on Delinquency, May 18, 1964. Carton 7, Folder 4.

By March 1963, the NAACP had successfully established 19 credit unions for its members across the country. Sacramento, organized in 1949, had 1497 members with \$285,000 in shares.⁴² It did not take long for the Sacramento Credit Union to reach notoriety across the USA, Canada, and many foreign countries due to its unique mission and its many successes. This was in part because of a special article published by BRIDGE magazine, the Credit Union National Association's



Photo from "NAACP Credit Unions," *Credit Union Bridge Magazine*, March 1963. Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection, Carton 7: Folder 3.

magazine, in 1963.⁴³ In this article, Virna Canson was interviewed and explained the many benefits the Credit Union provided its members as well as its

⁴² "NAACP Credit Unions," *Credit Union Bridge Magazine*, March 1963. Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection, Carton 7: Folder 3.

⁴³ Canson cites this article as the moment when the NAACP Sacramento Credit Union first put itself on the international map in her written address Letter, "The Road Ahead for the

philosophical mission to spread economic democracy to all by catering to the needs of Black Sacramentans. Many of the issues surrounding access to credit varied for Black communities in different regions and cities. In St. Paul, Minnesota for example, members were getting too much credit too easily at an annual interest rate of 36%.⁴⁴ Many in St. Paul could easily access credit for loans on cars and other purchases, but when it came to housing loans in particular many were unable to make the down payment necessary before the NAACP credit union was established.

Challenges

“Delinquency” in the form of missed payments and poor branch management were problems that credit unions often faced among their membership across the board. The topic of “delinquency” quickly became a flash point for racist discourses. Four NAACP credit unions had been liquidated due to these issues by 1963. Canson maintained that these issues were universal issues credit unions would inevitably face at times with all Americans. In other words, this did not reflect a “black” or “lower class” lapse in character to be pathologized but reflected “symptoms of deeper and more basic problems which it is the responsibility of all Americans to solve.” She argued that “the future of the credit union movement may well rest in its efforts to serve the needs of those who need the credit union the most.”⁴⁵ The key to continued growth in the credit union was more financial education.

Canson understood financial education to be essential for the growth and success of credit unions. For instance, after establishing an Education Committee in 1963, Canson reported that delinquency loans dropped from \$71,407.36 to \$47,976.52.⁴⁶ On the one hand, she understood that many attributed failures of NAACP credit unions to the fact that they were “black institutions.” This racist logic, she argued, had even permeated the Black community and it was the mission of the credit union to change this:

NAACP Credit Union”, Bancroft Library Special Collections, Berkeley California BANC MSSS 78/180c. For the Bridge Magazine article itself, see “NAACP Credit Unions,” *Credit Union Bridge Magazine*, March 1963. Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection, Carton 7: Folder 3.

⁴⁴ “NAACP Credit Unions,” *Credit Union Bridge Magazine*, March 1963. Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection, Carton 7: Folder 3.

⁴⁵ “NAACP Credit Unions,” *Credit Union Bridge Magazine*, March 1963. Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection, Carton 7: Folder 3.

⁴⁶ Virna Canson, letter to NAACP Sacramento Branch Credit Union Members, May 18th, 1964.

Because I work with these persons (“delinquents”) very closely I can see here again, the effects of the system on our delinquency problem. What are the effects? Simply this, over the years we have been taught to disrespect ourselves...How many times do you hear the remark, I don’t trust a Negro business. This is exactly what our foes would have us think about ourselves.⁴⁷

In this way the Credit Unions came to represent much more than just a practical solution to economic problems. They were social institutions in many ways who provided status, respect, and establishment for the Black community of Sacramento. Many people involved embraced capitalism and, in part, its logic that implied economic success reflected individual character. They used this as a platform to make a case for equality and Black respect.

Indeed, it was the era of McCarthyism after all, and the NAACP was not outside of this anti-communist sentiment. In the name of spreading economic democracy the credit unions were “open to anybody,” said Canson, “*but a communist.*” While emphasizing that 90% of the NAACP credit union members were black citizens, Canson described what might be called a commitment to capitalism as a system that could work for black people if the right institutions existed (and the wrong ones did not). She considered segregation the greatest “deterrent to credit union work.”⁴⁸

Despite efforts to provide life insurance and loan protections that would empower Black individuals and families to accumulate generational capital, Canson and the NAACP faced systemic roadblocks because of other sectors. For example, Canson described how a particular credit union was unable to provide its members with loan protection and life savings insurance through CUNA Mutual Insurance Society because the NAACP Credit Union does not belong to the insurance league.⁴⁹ And, it does not belong to the league because the members of this insurance society refused to be integrated at chapter meetings, league dinners, and other functions. She emphasized that this was the systemic issue at the root of problems faced by the credit unions when it came to generational wealth accumulation via home ownership and life insurance policies.⁵⁰ Canson also emphasized that the NAACP did not only cater to “low-income groups”, and

⁴⁷ Virna Canson letter to the Credit Union “The Road Ahead” Oct 14, 1963. Carton 7, Folder 4.

⁴⁸ “NAACP Credit Unions,” *Credit Union Bridge Magazine*, March 1963. Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection, Carton 7: Folder 3.

⁴⁹ Virna Canson Letter to Sacramento Branch Credit Union Members, January 16, 1964, Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection. Carton 7, Folder 4, 30.

⁵⁰ Virna Canson Letter to Sacramento Branch Credit Union Members, January 16, 1964, Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection. Carton 7, Folder 4.

though a high percentage of their members were in this socio-economic category, the NAACP credit unions members and potential members ranged from low to high income, dispelling the racist idea that low-income correlated with particular groups as a symptom of racial inferiority. “We have people who have earned their Ph.D. degrees, people in high income brackets,” she explained.⁵¹ This served the purpose of investing in systems of capital accumulation to help what was ultimately a systemic issue of segregation affecting African Americans at a disproportionate level in Sacramento and other regions across the country.

One of the unique benefits of the NAACP Credit Unions was that when someone deposited money as savings into the credit union account, it was covered by life insurance in total.⁵² In 1964, the NAACP Sacramento Branch had to withhold the dividends for 1963 in order to place a reserve on hold in the event that delinquencies continued to increase.⁵³ Effectively, the two major needs the credit unions met were low-cost credit lines and life insurance which would help members accrue assets that would be passed down generations via property value and life insurance policies.

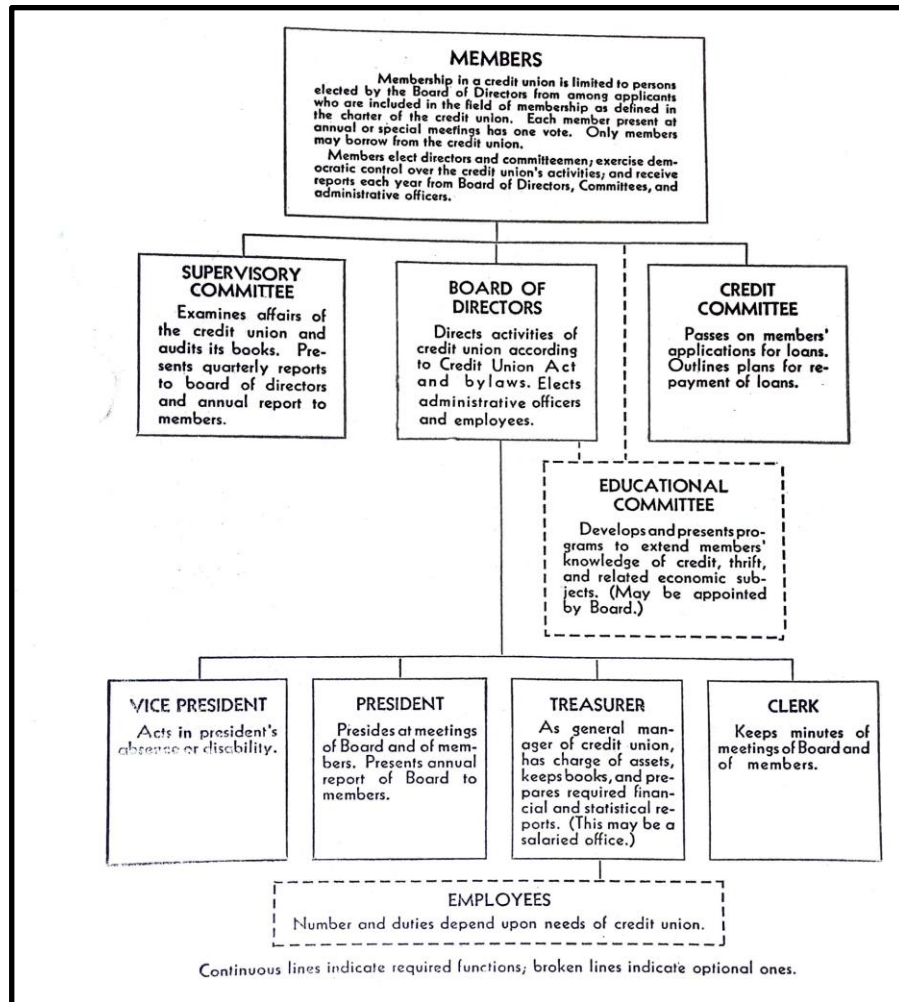
Credit Union Structure

The structure of the credit union was democratic and ran on member votes. Members elected a supervisory committee, a board of directors, and a credit committee to oversee the credit union workings and along with the president, vice president, and treasurer. However, this structure relied on active participation and dedication on the part of the members. The Sacramento branch struggled at times to convince several of its members to buy in as Virna Canson’s letters over the years suggest.

⁵¹ Virna Canson Letter to Sacramento Branch Credit Union Members, January 16, 1964, Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection. Carton 7, Folder 4.

⁵² See Virna Canson Letter to Sacramento Branch Credit Union Members, January 16, 1964, Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection. Carton 7, Folder 4; Canson Letter to Credit Union Members, Jan 20, 1964. Carton 7, Folder 4.

⁵³ Virna Canson Letter to Sacramento Branch Credit Union Members, January 16, 1964, Bancroft Library, NAACP Region I Collection. Carton 7, Folder 4.



Successes

Successes are hard to identify beneath generalized numbers in credit union reports, but they do allow one to speculate on the impact. Canson reported in 1963 that the Sacramento Branch had over 1600 members. For context, the Bureau of the Census for the Department of Commerce recorded that Sacramento had 12,103 Black adult residents in 1960 (out of a total population of 191,667 registered adults).⁵⁴ The Credit Union Reports from 1955, 1960, 1961, and 1962 demonstrate consistent growth that remained proportional to the growing Black population of Sacramento over those years. In other words, the credit union struggled to grow proportionally speaking, but as the population increased so did the membership accordingly for the first 15 years. Therefore, based on the coverages we know the credit union provided, by 1963 over 1,600 Black Sacramentans had access to affordable mortgage loans, life insurance, and other forms of financial training. In 1964 the Branch reported loaning out \$308,412.03. While it is hard to track the

⁵⁴ See "Sacramento Metropolitan Area Housing Trends" 1964, UC Davis Special Collections, Call Number: CAL 138:9.

specific impact of this money and the institution, Nathaniel Colley and the Sacramento Union published special periodical editions on the success of Black Businesses into the 1980s.⁵⁵

IV. 1950s Redevelopment– Racism, Bonds, and Primitive Accumulation in Sacramento’s Renewal Project

“To the public health, safety and general welfare of the people of the State of California and of the City of Sacramento, and which conditions of blight are hereby found and determined to constitute social and economic liabilities requiring redevelopment for the interests of the health, safety and general welfare of the people of the State of California and of the City of Sacramento.”

-City of Sacramento

The City’s Vision

The story of Sacramento’s “Redevelopment” parallels the creation of the Credit Unions. This alternative mission to “remove blight” and utilize prime real estate for the “general welfare of the people” began in 1948 when the City Council appropriated \$3,200 for a survey of the West End of downtown.⁵⁶ This came one year prior to the establishment of the first NAACP credit union (which would also be in Sacramento). After this survey determined the existence of “blight” and defined specific measures to be taken, the City Council petitioned for \$364,000 in federal funds on the grounds of Title I of the National Housing Act of 1949. The Planning Commission demarcated an initial sixty-block area for the first phase of the redevelopment plan. Through this process the city formed the Redevelopment Agency and appointed five white men to oversee the project: Herbert H. Jaqueth (Chairman), H. Harold Leavey, Mrs. Pat Clark, Fred J. Grumm, Fred W. Read (also the former V.P. and General Manager of California Fruit Exchange). These men held the power for making plans, relocation, financing, purchasing, and assembling and selling the land for development purposes.⁵⁷ Interestingly, this same agency was responsible for “assuring that land is acquired in a fair, efficient

⁵⁵ Sacramento Observer Records, Center for Sacramento History, Special Editions on Black Businesses, 1985, 1989 (Box 4: 108-109); Black Business Hall of Fame Program, 1989 (Box 6:2).

⁵⁶ Report “Sacramento Renewal: City on the Move” 1965. University of California, Davis, Special Collections.

⁵⁷ Report “Sacramento Renewal: City on the Move” 1965. University of California, Davis, Special Collections, 2.

and equitable manner, and that acquisition is completed in sufficient time to allow for a speedy accomplishment of objectives of the Redevelopment Plans.” What this meant, is that the system had no real ability to provide accountability for the redevelopment process. Which is to say, the only way that the West End community and its advocates could defend their interests and rights during this process was through well-timed and issue-specific court cases that highlighted injustices as they unfolded. Nathaniel Colley himself stated that this was the NAACP’s strategy.

According to the City’s own redevelopment report in 1963,⁵⁸ the city provided the following assistance to those displaced:

1. Relocation payments
2. Referrals to public housing
3. Referrals to private rentals and sales
4. Assistance in securing FHA Section 221 loans or rental housing and assistance to business owners in securing loans from the Small Business Administration or in securing the counseling aid of the California Department of Employment

“221” Housing:

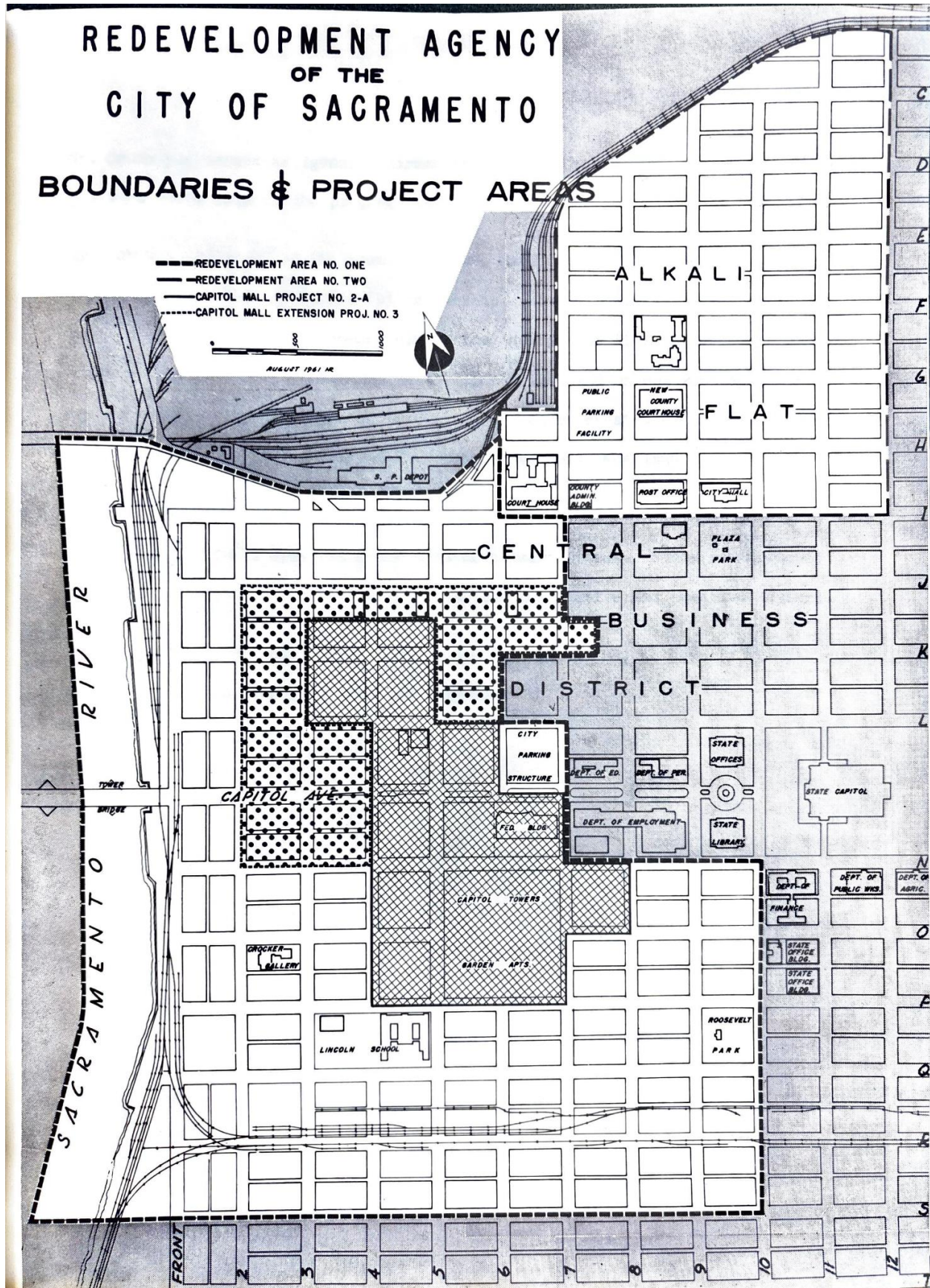
“Under this program qualified relocatees may purchase one- to four- family homes with a maximum mortgage of 40 years and nonprofit organizations may construct or rehabilitate rental and cooperative housing (with priority for displaces) at a below-market interest rate.

construct or rehabilitate rental and cooperative housing (with priority for

Relocation Payments:

“In relocating a family or individual: The Redevelopment Agency could pay up to \$200 in actual moving costs. Additionally, the Agency could make a “relocation adjustment payment” up to \$500 for a family or elderly individual who met certain requirements. After the residents were displaced with inadequate compensation, the land was cleared and made ready for new construction and auctioned to interested developers.

⁵⁸ Report “Sacramento Renewal: City on the Move” 1963. Special Collections.



Redevelopment Bonds

The state implemented a new form of financing for the first phase of Redevelopment called the “Capitol Mall Project.” This financing plan was authorized by state law. Instead of using City or County taxes, or the credit of these governmental agencies, the Redevelopment Agency of Sacramento sold a \$2 million bond issued in August 1956. This bond’s leverage was solely the expected increment in tax revenue which would derive from the increased value of the property. In other words, when the “blight” was removed—when the communities of color were effectively displaced and the land repurposed—the value of this land would automatically increase in the market. In this case, primitive accumulation of capital rested solely on the value/devalue of land in relation to structures of race. A space perceived as “white” was automatically of higher property value because it was not a “black inhabited space”—or, as the city called it, a “blighted” space. The city presented a whole report on the conditions that determined the status of “blighted”, but what remained consistent if unspoken was that these spaces were inhabited, controlled, and defined by communities of color. Therefore, as the logic of this system went, to remove those communities from an area would automatically increase its value in the eyes of the white capitalist class who determined the “interests” and borders of belonging to the city’s prosperous market.

This increase in value at the direct expense of Black people’s livelihood, property ownership, businesses, and general community was the source of financial leverage for the tax bonds that made Sacramento’s redevelopment possible. This became a model for other cities around the United States. In short, the crafting of race and race relations in Sacramento’s markets was the precondition of capital production when it came to housing and property values, the bedrock of generational wealth in the American system.⁵⁹ Creating this system of bonds leveraged by tax revenue increase was a direct product of this precondition. It wedded the production of capital to the production of racism in perpetuity. When the city evaluated the expected increase in tax revenue from this displacement, they estimated it would reach “5 to 6 times that of previous revenues.”⁶⁰ “Previous revenues” referring to the value of the properties as they existed before the displacement of the African American community there.

In 1959, the city repeated this process to expand the Capitol Mall Project to include 10 more blocks of the West End of downtown. In August 1963, the city pursued this development by issuing its second, larger tax revenue bond. The

⁵⁹ For a history of how and why the American economy came to be centered around private homeownership, see Chloe Thurston, *At the Boundaries of Homeownership: Credit, Discrimination and the American State*, 2018.

⁶⁰ Report “Sacramento Renewal: City on the Move” 1965. University of California, Davis, Special Collections, 10.

principal amount of the bond this time was \$2.8 million. Tax revenues had already increased to 3 to 4 times their rate prior to redevelopment, and it was against this trajectory that the value of the bond was leveraged at a favorable 3.9% rate with an expected retirement date 13 years later. Here one can see how a process set in motion continued beyond a single event. Once set in motion, other forms of capital production were able to unfold but only after cutting out the Black community of the West end from the means of production. And it was this reality that the Credit Union sought to remedy by creating a parallel economic apparatus within.

The Relocation Committee

The Tentative Plan agreed upon by the City Council on October 25th, 1954 led to the creation of the Sacramento Citizens Relocation Committee on October 28th, 1954.⁶¹ This committee was designed to oversee the relocation process and Mayor H. H. Hendren was said to preside over the selection of its 7 committee members. These citizen members were, according to the recommendation of Councilman E. A. Bahnfleth in the *Sac Bee* on October 29th, 1954, to reflect “top level people well diversified segments of our community, such as church groups, labor, real estate, home builders, and other groups who could materially assist in the program.”⁶² They would review and assist the plans of the Sacramento Relocation Agency which was overseeing the project and implementation of the municipal governments master plan for the city. In short, the citizen relocation committee was the design for trying to “seek maximum community participation in carrying out these plans.”⁶³

However, in 1975, the Sacramento Regional Area Planning Commission produced a report: “Profile of Relocation in the Sacramento Region”. It states the Uniform Relocation Assistance (URA) Act constrained relocation committees to a maximum 4-year payment of \$4000 compensation to renters. The report maintained this was wholly inadequate for the costs faced by the displaced.⁶⁴ The report highlights this as a central limitation while listing several inadequacies across the board for redevelopment programs in California up to that point in time. It was the general policy of the federal government that “The Division of Slum Clearance and Urban Redevelopment will not approve a loan and grant

⁶¹ See the *Sacramento Bee* for some local leaders’ reactions to this measure. “Civic, Spiritual Leaders Support Slum Cleanup,” October 30, 1954.

⁶² “Council Vows Racial Equality if Slums Go”, *Sacramento Bee*, October 29th, 1954.

⁶³ “Council Vows Racial Equality if Slums Go”, *Sacramento Bee*, October 29th, 1954.

⁶⁴ “Profile of Relocation in the Sacramento Region 1975”, Sacramento Regional Area Planning Commission, UC Davis Special Collections, 1976.

application for the redevelopment of slum areas unless relocation plans indicate the ability of the community to provide decent, safe, and sanitary housing within the means of families to be displaced.”⁶⁵ This entailed evidence of expanding the housing supply in the local area and compensating racial minorities especially when families were displaced. The issue, as Colley always pointed out, was that of enforcement. Often the same Redevelopers looking for federal loans were the ones in charge of setting up enforcement committees. In the case of Sacramento, the Relocation Committee was made up of community members though these were selected by Mayor Hendrick himself, not the community.

According to the *Sacramento Union*, Federal loan programs set up by the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1954 were the primary loan advantages available to those displaced during this redevelopment.⁶⁶ According to this same article, the California Redevelopment Law required that the dislocated be provided with “decent safe and sanitary housing at prices they can afford to pay before redevelopment may proceed.” The Citizens Relocation Committee was the municipal government’s measure for acquiescing to this law.

The Rumford Fair Housing Act

When the Rumford Fair Housing Act passed in September 1963, it barred discrimination based on race, religion, or other social status and mandated that economic means drive exchange in the housing market. But in challenging racial prejudice across all individual transactions, it thereby undermined the foundational logic on which housing values had been premised. In short, in barring racist discrimination, it not only reversed racism but challenged economic class distinction. It removed how a white class of homeowners maintained the value against which their credit in the housing market was leveraged. As such, it moved to crash racism and economic structures in what was a system of racial capitalist exploitation.⁶⁷

Thus, before the ink had dried on the Rumford Fair Housing Act the California Real Estate Association moved to overturn the new law. The measure the CREA put forth was known as Proposition 14, and it promised to protect individual and real estate corporations' right to discriminate on the grounds of

⁶⁵ “The Use of Federal Aids in Relocating Families Displaced by the Clearance of Slum Areas.” [NAACP, Region I, Records 1942-1986](#), Collection Number BANC MSS 78/180 c., Carton 4, Folder 16.

⁶⁶ “West End: Families Living in Squalid Area Would Much Prefer to be Living Elsewhere,” *Sacramento Union*, Oct 22, 1954.

⁶⁷ For a synopsis of the impact of the Rumford Fair Housing Act, see “Desegregating Sacramento: Part 2 Private Housing,” *Center for Sacramento History*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBpzw5JwUM>.

“personal property protections.” Kendall Stuart, the white vice president of the Sacramento Real Estate Board led this charge. His campaign was largely successful as voters chose to overturn the Rumford Fair Housing Act in almost a 2:1 margin in 1964. 4,147,837 votes for ‘yes’ on Proposition 14 won against 2,133,134 votes for ‘no.’ This was not just about racism and segregation. This was about the ability for the Civil Rights Act of 1866 to be a reality, the ability for all U.S. citizens to own and protect and to sell property equally and thereby gain economic success and autonomy.

However, the verdict was not to be permanent in the long run. Nathaniel Colley and the NAACP mounted a legal case against Proposition 14 in 1966—*Clifton Hill versus Crawford Miller*.⁶⁸ Appealing once again to the laws of Reconstruction, Colley made the case that Proposition 14 was unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment. He and others took this case to the California Supreme Court, which ruled that Proposition 14 was unconstitutional. The California Real Estate Association retaliated by taking this verdict all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court. The U.S. Supreme Court sided with Colley’s team and ruled that Proposition 14 was unconstitutional making the Rumford Fair Housing Act the law of the land in California. As with any law, this meant the question now turned to implementation and enforcement.

V. Black Sacramento: A Case for Reparations

The story of the NAACP Credit Union Movement helps us avoid certain mythical traps on which to build a case for reparations. The most egregious of these might be that the story of Black Sacramento is only one of exploitation. On the contrary, the NAACP had great and steady successes in providing economic institutions for communities of color and this undoubtedly helped to build and rebuild a Black middle and upper business class in Sacramento in the mid to late nineteenth century. The alternative pitfall would be to refute a need for reparations in lieu of such a narrative. If the story is not one of simple exploitation, then reparations is a mere political agenda devoid of fact or precedent. Both sides of such a discourse are historically inaccurate and rooted in racist assumptions. Alternatively, the credit unions show how a resilient class of people worked hard for many successes in a system that was fundamentally rooted in racial capitalist structures. Race and economic value were inextricably linked, making exploitation a constant reality alongside the effort to create an alternative network of Black credit that could serve as an economic base for fair and accessible mortgage loans, life insurance, and other education needs once certain legal battles were won like the Rumford Fair Housing Act.

⁶⁸ See Clifton Hill Case File, Nathaniel S. and Jerlean J. Colley Papers—MS003, Series 4, Center for Sacramento History.

In particular, the new system of tax-leveraged bonds that funded the displacement of the Black community on the West End and the reaction to the Rumford Fair Housing Act clearly demonstrate the racist nature of primitive accumulation in that economy. Though many options exist, I argue that this would be the most effective direction for making a case for reparations as well as planning the forms a reparations initiative in Sacramento might take.

VI. Editorial Notes on Archives

This section contains the collections visited and the sources used. I have also visited the Sacramento Superior Court Records with the aim of finding court cases filed by business and property owners in the West End in the 1950s. I located several cases filed by known business owners in the following list. When I went to the court records, they told me I was not allowed to access the microfilms where they are stored myself. There might be a way, but I was unable to continue pursuing that line of inquiry at the time. (See list below under Sacramento Superior Court)

Archives

The Bancroft Library Special Collections, Berkeley, California.

[NAACP, Region I, Records 1942-1986](#), Collection Number BANC MSS 78/180 c.

- "NAACP Credit Unions", Credit Union Magazine, Bancroft Library, Carton 7, Folder 3.
- "By Laws of Sacramento Branch NAACP Credit Union." Carton 90, Folder 11.
- "Report of Branch Election 1955," Carton 90, Folder 11.
- "Pep Songs for NAACP," Carton 90, Folder 9.
- "The Use of Federal Aid in Relocating Families Displaced By the Clearance of Slum Areas," (No date given) Carton 4, Folder 16.
- "Report of Credit Unions of the West Coast Region NAACP, Dec 31st, 1960." Carton 7, Folder 4.
- "Sacramento Branch NAACP Credit Union: Financial and Statistical Report Post Closing, December 31, 1964."
- Virna Canson and Nathaniel Colley Letter to Members on Delinquency, May 18, 1964. Carton 7, Folder 4.
- Canson Letter to the Officers and Members of the Sacramento Credit Union, Sept 13, 1962. Carton 7, Folder 2.
- Canson Letter to Credit Union Members, Jan 20, 1964. Carton 7, Folder 4.
- Virna Canson letter to the Credit Union "The Road Ahead" Oct 14, 1963. Carton 7, Folder 4.
- "Financial and Statistical Report: Sacramento Branch, 1955," Carton 90, Folder 11.
- Sacramento Branch Credit Union Financial and Statistical Report, May 31, 1960. Carton 7, Folder 1.
- Sacramento Branch Credit Union Financial and Statistical Report, June 30, 1960. Carton 7, Folder 1.
- Sacramento Branch Credit Union Financial and Statistical Report, Dec 31, 1960. Carton 7, Folder 1.
- Sacramento Branch Credit Union Financial and Statistical Report, Aug 31, 1961. Carton 7, Folder 1.
- "Sacramento Branch Credit Union Financial and Statistical Report, Sept 30, 1961. Carton 7, Folder 1.
- Sacramento Branch Credit Union Financial and Statistical Report, Oct 31, 1961. Carton 7, Folder 1.
- Sacramento Branch Credit Union Financial and Statistical Report, Feb 28, 1962. Carton 7, Folder 2.
- Sacramento Branch Credit Union Financial and Statistical Report, Aug 31, 1962. Carton 7, Folder 2.

- Sacramento Branch NAACP Credit Union Financial and Statistical Report, December 31, 1964. Carton 7, Folder 2.
- "Report of Credit Unions of the West Coast Region NAACP, June 30, 1961. Carton 7, Folder 1.
- List of NAACP Credit Unions 1961. Carton 7, Folder 1.
- NAACP Credit Union Progress Report, May 24, 1961. Carton 7, Folder 1.
- Canson Request for San Francisco Credit Union Report, Feb 7, 1961. Carton 7 Folder 1.
- "California Credit Union League Central Area Conference" Aug 1954. Carton 42, Folder 39.
- Virna Canson letter to Region I Branches, Nov 1975. Carton 42, Folder 13.
- "Neighborhood Preservation Program", April 1974. Carton 42, Folder 13.

Shields Library Special Collections, University of California, Davis.

- "Profile of Relocation in Sacramento Region: 1975", Gov Info Stacks, DOC-STA CA/SAC R44.
- "Sacramento Metropolitan Area Housing Trends" 1964, Special Collections, Call Number: CAL 138:9.
- "Sacramento Redevelopment Report" 1959, Special Collections, Call Number: CAL 126:15
- Report "Sacramento Renewal: City on the Move" 1963. Special Collections.

Center for Sacramento History

Nathaniel S. and Jerlean J. Colley Papers—MS003, Series 1-11

- (All Series)
- Published Essay, "Statutory and Judicial Enforcement of the Right to Housing", Series 4: Legal Career.
- Clifton Hill Case File, Series 4: Legal Career

City Council Meeting Minutes

- Policy Statements on Redevelopment (Tentative Plan): File No 1087, City Clerk's Office
- Redevelopment Resolution, October 25, 1954, File No 1648, City Clerk's Office
- Special Meeting of the City Council Consideration of Report No. 6, Tentative Plan and Report for Capitol Mall Area Project, July 20, 1954.
 - Highlighted Meetings dealing with City Policy Redevelopment:
 - *May 20, 1954
 - *May 27, 1954
 - *June 15, 1954
 - *June 29, 1954
 - *July 15, 1954
 - Special Meetings called on:
 - *June 15th and 29th
 - *July 20th and 22nd
 - *October 22nd and 28th

Sacramento Union Records

- Highlighted Issues:
 - *July 21st, 1954 - Mayor Hendren Six Point Policy for anti-discrimination reparation measures surrounding the redevelopment project

Assessment Records of City Property; 1953-54 (ends here)

Phone Book listings

Sacramento Union Records

Sacramento Observer Records

*Special Editions on Black Businesses

1985, 1989 (Box 4: 108-109)

Undated (Box 4: 54)

Undated (Box 1: 25)

Black Business Hall of Fame Program, 1989 (Box 6:2)

New York Public Library (Digital)

Black Motorist Green Book Records

Sacramento Superior Court

Known business owners from the West End 1950-1970 (those with asterisks filed court cases but was unable to access microfilm records of these cases:

**M. L. Vann (Barbershop)

Palmer Pinkney

**Louise Anderson (partners)

Isaac Anderson (partners)

"Nitz Jackson"

R.C. Peyon

**Grace Morgan-Jones

Carter McMorris

**Cecil York

**C.B. Frazier (Realtor)

**LeBerry

**Eugene Washington

**Willie Hausey

Ginger Rutlan

**Alex and Don Moore (Momo)

**Vincent T. Thompson

**Sam Lota and Son

Frank Canson (Safeway Cleaners)

Taylor Walker (Barbershop)

O'Reiley (Shoe Repair)

O.A. Johnson (Palace Laundry)

**George Dunlap

Dr. Leroy Bradford Brown

Dr. Arthur R. Trent

**Dr. Kenneth Johnson

**Roscoe Brewer

**Dr. Clarence Wigfall

Carl Buckner (Congo Club)

Jerlean Colley

Periodicals

Sacramento Bee
Sacramento Observer
Sacramento Union

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- "Desegregating Sacramento: Part 2 Private Housing," Center for Sacramento History, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBpzwr5JwUM>
- Chris Lango, "Virna Canson: Sacramento's Mother of Civil Rights," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQHBQaWq2Ds>

**Sacramento Redevelopment and Displacement: Sacramento's Black Community and the
Fight Against Segregation (1950-1970)**

Research conducted by Sareena Crawford

University of California, Davis In collaboration with

The City of Sacramento &

The Greater Sacramento Urban League October 2023 - July 2024

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Key

- ❖ Source Name / Link
 - Article Content
 - Interpretation - Context - My Comments

Names

Abbreviations

Introduction | Finding Summary

The **SRA** framed the 1950s redevelopment of Sacramento’s historically diverse West End neighborhood as a public health and safety improvement project, but it ended up primarily serving commercial interests. At the same time, federal housing policies and local real estate practices entrenched racial segregation, forcing minority residents to live in substandard conditions. Historians Damany Fisher and Jesus Hernandez highlighted how redevelopment displaced many Black residents without adequately addressing their housing needs, perpetuating segregation and creating ghettos in predominantly Black neighborhoods like Del Paso Heights (**DPH**) and Oak Park.¹ The media campaign by the *Sacramento Bee* and the *Sacramento Union* often demonized West End residents, blaming them for their blight to justify their displacement under the guise of “urban renewal.” These newspapers are significant sources as they were the spearheads of a media blitz that shaped public perception of countless redevelopment, property, and housing issues.²

In one such series, the *Union* tells the story of the Doe family. When James and Harriet Doe spoke to the *Union* on Friday, October 22, 1954, their home in the West End was a glorified shack. The family told the *Union*, “We have no way to heat except the stove. We try to stuff up the holes, but it is hard to keep the place warm in winter.” Besides its lack of heating and poor

¹ Damany M. Fisher, “Far From Utopia: Race, Housing, and the Fight to End Residential Segregation in Sacramento, 1900-1980,” PhD dissertation, University of California, Berkeley (2008); Damany M. Fisher, Page & Turnbull “Sacramento African American Experience History Project- Historic Context Statement,” (Historic Context Statement, City of Sacramento, 2023); Jesus Hernandez, “Redlining Revisited: Mortgage Lending Patterns in Sacramento 1930-2004,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33, no 3 (June 2009), DOI:10.1111/j.1468-2427.2009.00873.x.

² Clarence Caesar, “An Historical Overview of Sacramento Black Community 1850-1980,” Masters thesis, California State University, Sacramento (1985).

insulation, the two-bedroom home that slept them and their five children had no electricity in the kitchen or living room, and hot water only reached the bathroom. When the paper asked them

about redevelopment, Harriet stated, “They couldn’t do a better thing. People wouldn’t mind paying more rent if they could get something decent.”³ The Sacramento NAACP echoed the Does’ sentiments, stating through prominent civil rights lawyer Nathaniel S. Colley that they supported redevelopment if redevelopment benefitted Black West End residents as the city promised citizens it would.⁴ Despite the article’s title, the residents wanted to stay in the West End. They just wanted “something decent” and hoped redevelopment would be the way to achieve it. Unfortunately for families like the Does, redevelopment would not save them. Instead, redevelopment put Black West End Sacramentans at an intersection of displacement and housing discrimination.

Urban redevelopment policies in Sacramento, particularly the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency’s (SHRA/SRA) actions, prioritized economic and industrial development over social equity, leading many displaced Black residents to move from the West End to DPH and Oak Park.⁵

Initially, the city required a two-thirds majority vote for the redevelopment of the West End, which it did not obtain. Yet, it proceeded with the project due to its interpretation of the SCOTUS ruling *Berman v Parker*.⁶ The city also justified urban renewal under the California

³ Tom Evans, “West End: Families Living in Squalid Area Would Much Prefer to Be Living Elsewhere” *The Sacramento Union*, Fri, Oct 22, 1954, <https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-sacramento-union-west-end-families/148736494/>, 11.

⁴ “NAACP Endorses Redevelopment As Council Acts,” *The Sacramento Bee*, Fri, Oct 29, 1954, <https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-sacramento-bee-naACP-endorses-redeve/139821518/>, 1.

⁵ Sandra Littlewood, “Tour Stresses Dilemmas Of Minority Housing,” *Sacramento Bee*, Sun, Dec 18, 1960, <https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-sacramento-bee-tour-stresses-dilemma/144743619/>, 14.

⁶ William Orville Douglas and Supreme Court Of The United States, U.S. Reports: *Berman v. Parker*, 348 U.S. 26, 1954, Periodical, <https://www.loc.gov/item/usrep348026/>.

Community Redevelopment Law, which mandates the relocation of displaced residents.⁷

However, the city failed to fulfill this legal requirement. H. Harold Leavy of the SHRA accepted

\$15,000 in federal funds for relocation and later claimed that redevelopment had met its legal and moral obligations despite not adequately relocating residents.⁸ This neglect indicates the SRA’s failure to meet legal redevelopment requirements, violating the terms of the Community Redevelopment Law and accepting federal funds for relocation without adequately housing citizens. The City of Sacramento, through its redevelopment policies and lack of attention to displacement, furthered a culture of segregation and created the intersection of racialized displacement in the city. From the city’s lead, real estate groups and lenders blocked Black families from exiting these segregated areas. Sacramento, along with lenders and realtors, created segregation and then ignored Black residents and their needs, allowing ghettos to fester. The actions and inactions of the city resulted in the segregation of Black communities, contradicting its promise of improved living environments through urban renewal, which also resulted in a long-lasting distrust between the Black community and the City of Sacramento.⁹

⁷ “Notice of Public Hearing On Tentative Plan For Redevelopment of Project Area No. 2-A - Capitol Mall Area Prior To Submission Of Plan To City Council,” *The Sacramento Legal Press*, Fri, Mar 12, 1954, <https://www.newspapers.com/article/sacramento-legal-press-notice-of-public/150209233/>, 4.

⁸ “Redevelopment Agency ‘West End Slums Not Our Problem,’” *The Sacramento Union*, Tue, Feb 19, 1963, <https://www.newspapers.com/article/the-sacramento-union-west-end-slums-not/144736298/>, 1.

⁹ Jeff Raimundo et al., “Redevelopment: A History of ‘Urban Removal’” *Sacramento Bee*, June 14, 1970, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/619743404/?match=1&terms=Redevelopment%3A%20A%20History%20of%20Urban%20Removal>.

Findings

West End Settlement & Redevelopment’s “Slum Clearance”

This section covers the redevelopment of Sacramento’s West End, once known as the city’s “Skid

Row.” The area was historically home to a diverse population, with 41% of the city’s non- white population in one neighborhood consisting primarily of African Americans, Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, Mexican Americans, and single male laborers.¹⁰ These groups all faced systematic segregation due to federal housing and local real estate practices that kept them in the West End. There, they formed a community where they lived amongst each other, and Black residents frequented Japanese and Chinese American establishments when white businesses didn’t welcome them.¹¹ As noted by historian Damany Fisher in his thesis, “Far from Utopia,” these minority groups faced segregation due to local real estate practices, federal housing policies, and municipal officials.

“The residential segregation of African Americans in Sacramento began with the practices of white realtors and white homeowners, who inserted race restrictive covenants into their deeds that barred blacks and other nonwhites from occupancy in Sacramento pre-World War Two suburbs. These patterns were made more permanent by federal housing policies created by agencies such as the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Veterans Administration (VA), both of which encouraged real estate developers to use race restrictive covenants to maintain racial homogeneity. Concurrently, federal redevelopment funds used by municipal officials were used to displace many

¹⁰Ken Lastufka, “Redevelopment of Sacramento’s West End, 1950-1970: A Historical Overview With An Analysis Of The Impact Of Relocation,” Masters thesis, California State University, Sacramento (1985), 20.

¹¹ Thomas W Joo, “Urban Renewal and Sacramento’s Lost Japantown,” *Chicago-Kent Law Review* 92, no 3 (2017), 1010.

blacks from downtown Sacramento, which had the largest concentration of African Americans in the city.”¹²

Sociologist Jesus Hernandez echoed Fisher’s claims, stating that the New Deal housing finance programs—based on the idea that integration led to a decrease in property value—used racial

categories to decide who could live where and access resources. Simply, “New Deal housing finance programs institutionalized the use of racial categories in assigning space and allocating social goods,” solidifying racial segregation and making areas like the West End the only affordable housing options for mainly minority residents, until it wasn’t.¹³

In 1950, the Sacramento City Council planned a redevelopment project for the West End, overseen by the Housing and Redevelopment Agency, also known as the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency (**SHRA/SRA**). The redevelopment was necessary for the betterment of West End residents because many lived in poorly built and maintained buildings, but pro-development rhetoric blamed these same residents for their poor conditions.¹⁴ Many supporters of the redevelopment project resorted to demonizing the residents of the West End to justify the approval of the necessary bond, which would result in urban renewal and the displacement of minority residents. Many supporters of the redevelopment project resorted to demonizing the residents of the West End to justify approving the necessary loan with the “Proposition B” citizen vote. In the thesis “An Historical Overview of Sacramento Black,” historian Clarence Caesar details the pro-redevelopment media blitz launched by the *Sacramento Bee* and the *Sacramento Union*, a significant reason I used these papers as a source base. Caesar explains, “The media

¹² Damany M. Fisher, “Far From Utopia: Race, Housing, and the Fight to End Residential Segregation in Sacramento, 1900-1980,” PhD dissertation, University of California, Berkeley (2008), 1.

¹³ Jesus Hernandez, “Redlining Revisited: Mortgage Lending Patterns in Sacramento 1930-2004,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33, no 3 (June 2009), DOI:10.1111/j.1468-2427.2009.00873.x, 294.

¹⁴ Lastufka, 16-20; The community was blamed for the deterioration rather than the quality of materials used in the construction of the original West End. For more, see: 17; 20.

campaign by the two newspapers lasted from 1952 until 1957.” He furthered, “Both papers often used the ‘special series’ format to convince readers that conditions in the West End were so intolerable that redevelopment was really the only solution to its misery.”¹⁵ Caesar’s thesis chronicles the long history of the Black community in Sacramento, noting displacement by the SRA exacerbated existing issues with housing inequalities and redlining.¹⁶ As the secondary

sources show, this section aims to highlight the redevelopment of the West End and how it impacted its primarily minority residents.

Sacramento Bee

❖ [“Migration South and West of Negroes Shown” Sat, Dec 17, 1921](#)

- Great Migration Black census numbers to the North and West increased from 440,534 in 1910 to 780,794 in 1920.
- More Black individuals fled the Jim Crow South for the North and West.

❖ [“California Negro Total Doubles” Thu, Aug 13, 1931](#)

- While other Pacific coast states remained stagnant, census records show California’s Black population more than doubled between 1920 and 1930 (38,763 to 81,048).

❖ [“City Council Okehs Plaza Garage Plan” Fri Mar 31, 1950.](#)

- An underground garage was planned for downtown Sacramento. However, a housing action was unanimously in favor of a plan to negotiate with the federal government for \$2 million to be spent on 450 public housing units.

¹⁵ Clearance Caesar, “An Historical Overview of Sacramento Black Community 1850-1980,” Master’s thesis, California State University, Sacramento (1985), 161.

¹⁶ Caesar, 139-220.

- Real estate agents were fiercely opposed, saying private enterprises should do this housing project, not the government.
- Nathaniel S. Colley, representing the NAACP, supported the housing plan.

❖ [“Census Takers Are Set to Cover Hotels” Mon, Apr 10, 1950](#)

- Census takers moved into hotels, motels, trailer courts, and other non-traditional lodgings. As the West End had a high rate of single male workers, going into these lodgings was imperative to ensure the government accounted for all Sacramento

residents in the US census.

- This also meant that West End residents, even those in non-traditional lodgings, would be accounted for, hopefully providing names that can be tracked for relocation/displacement.

❖ [“Experts Suggest Ways To Develop City’s West End” Tue, Apr 11, 1950](#)

- Experts suggested a second mall, fisherman's wharf along the river, and that migrant single men “could not pay for rentals.”
- About 20% of West End residents could afford privately financed housing project rent.
- It was pointed out that “others could be provided accommodations in publicly financed low income housing projects.”
 - Early signs of recognition that housing issues could not be solved through redevelopment despite it being marketed as such. The city choosing industry over society.

❖ [“Advisory Unit Is Formed To Aid Urban Redevelopment” Wed, Apr 12, 1950](#)

- An urban redevelopment committee assisted the city council and planning commission with the “slum clearance and improvement program in the west end.”

❖ [“Path For City Slum Cleanup,” Sat Mar 27, 1954](#)

- California Supreme Court removed all legal barriers for “slum clearance projects in the capital and other cities in California.”
- The court found that a 1952 amendment to the law that allowed redevelopment stated that increased taxes could be used to pay for slum clearance.

❖ [“Redeveloping Plan Hearing is Put Over” Wed, Jun 16, 1954](#)

- While “an overwhelming majority of labor, women’s organizations and merchants”

endorsed the West End’s redevelopment, [Nathaniel S. Colley](#)—a prominent Black Sacramento, Bay Area, and NAACP civil rights attorney—warned of the threat of racial discrimination against those that would be displaced.

- Colley called for new settlements to plan of redevelopment to maintain integrationist efforts, as he suspected those hit hardest by displacement would be Black and other minority communities.

❖ [“City Will Act on Slum Plan Tomorrow” Wed, Jul 21, 1954](#)

- [T.D. Itano](#), the representative of the Japanese American Redevelopment Study Committee and attorney, asked for an alternate solution to the redevelopment, worried about the displacement of the Japanese community.
- Itano stated, “By this means the objective of redevelopment would be achieved with a minimum of displacement of businesses and consequent economic loss and hardship.”
- [Nathaniel S. Colley](#) was not opposed to the plan but focused more on the segregation of redeveloped areas.
- Colley said, “We cannot, however, approve any segregation by race in the relocation areas. If the power of the government can take over a private citizen’s land it ought to provide also for a place where all can live equally.”

❖ [“Another Major Milepost Is Passed on Clearance” Thu, Aug 19, 1954](#)

- The Sacramento City Council (SCC) set the redevelopment bond issue to

\$1,500,000. In part to discredit the concerns for the West End’s low-income, minority population,

The Bee emphasized that regardless of impacts on minorities, it was best for the “majority” of Sacramento.

- “There already has been displayed a wholesome and humane concern for minority rights. Indeed, this concern has been so great there may be some danger the rights of the majority will be forgotten.”

❖ [“Redevelopment Plan Would Ruthlessly Dislocate Sacramento’s Invaluable West End](#)

[Labor Market,” Sacramento Business and Taxpayer Association, Wed, Oct 27, 1954](#)

- This source is an open letter from the Sacramento Business and Taxpayer Association urging Sacramento residents to vote “no” on redevelopment (Proposition B) because it would dislocate many of the male workers who lived in

the West End.

- The Association charged that Sacramento’s anxiety to improve business conditions for a few investors would cost them the entire West End labor market.
- The West End was one of California’s most prominent “Hiring Halls” for agriculture, with 60,000 jobs filled each year in the district—15% of the agricultural hiring for the entire state.
- Many of those agricultural workers, non-farm laborers, and service workers lived and spent their money in Sacramento. Most of them lived there because employment agencies were in the area. West End businesses also catered to their

needs with low-cost restaurants, stores, hotels, and entertainment. Because of their low wages, they could only afford \$6-\$9 a week for a room, and the West End was the only place that offered such housing.

- As of the letter, Proposition B had no housing plan for laborers.

- They quote the SRA saying, “Positive studies for a new location are under way and are expected to yield results before the present center is directly affected.”
- The Association stated that the men did not deserve to be put into worse housing further from their employment centers, and to house them appropriately would surpass the \$ 1.5 million bond alone.

❖ “NAACP Endorses Redevelopment As Council Acts” Fri, Oct 29, 1954

- After the SCC adopted a resolution to combat racial discrimination and segregation in West End's redevelopment, the NAACP endorsed redevelopment and Proposition B (provided \$1.5 million taxpayer dollars for 15 block Capitol Mall Project).
- Nathaniel S. Colley, on behalf of the Sacramento NAACP, told *The Bee*,

“We’ve been for redevelopment as a principle all along... and have held back endorsement of this particular program because we wanted to see certain safeguards were provided. The resolution adopted last night provides those safeguards.”

- All minority leaders were concerned about planned and promised relocation after repeatedly bringing concerns to the SCC, responsible for the project's planning and budgeting through the SRA branch to oversee the project.

❖ “Against Redevelopment,” Sat, Oct 30, 1954

- Reader “P.R.C” sent a letter to the editor stating that “by the terms of the redevelopment act,” the SRA was responsible for some 4,000 people “mostly of minority races” from the West End.
- P.R.C. found it unfair that Sacramentans were asked to vote for \$1.5 million to uproot people from their homes.

“Leave these people right where they are. At the moment the bond issue should be dropped and a sweeping reappraisal of the whole plan of redevelopment made which take into consideration

human feelings and Christian principles, whereby these poorer people could secure low interest loans or direct subsidies so they could improve their present property or build new ones.”

❖ [“Council Presses Forward On Plan For Slum Cleanup,” Tom Goff, Wed, Nov 17, 1954](#)

- “The city council today gave every indication of plans to go ahead with the west end redevelopment program despite the failure of a general obligation bond financing proposal to win the necessary two thirds majority vote of the people.”
- The agency was able to do this by selling revenue bonds.
 - The city needed $\frac{2}{3}$ votes for redevelopment, which it didn’t get, but it still pushed forward with the project through a workaround. The city then

justifies the project under the Community Redevelopment Law, which it then breaks when failing to relocate citizens. Not only did this project cause undue harm to primarily Black and other minority residents, but it also broke every California law it functioned under.

❖ [“Chamber Industry Plan Shows Need Wide Open” Fri, Jan 18, 1957](#)

- The *Bee* charged the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce for not keeping promises and lagging on the industrial redevelopment plan.
- *The Bee* argued that “something much more tangible must be done if the Sacramento area is to hold its own in industrial development.”
 - Redevelopment was planned and promoted as the city’s way to becoming an industrial giant like San Francisco, not for the betterment of Sacramento citizens' personal lives.

❖ [“Sacramento Opinion” \(West End Alcoholism\) Fri, Jan 18, 1957](#)

- Airman Joseph G. Berger from Los Angeles noted that for a big city, Sacramento didn’t have a metropolitan life, and the West End had “so many alcoholics” that “are far from impressive.”
 - The *Bee* and The *Union* began a media campaign echoing these sentiments to demonize West End residents as social stains, hoping it

would curtail worries of their displacement.

❖ [“Letters From Readers: Alcoholism In Sacramento” Fri, Jan 18, 1957](#)

- A reader of the paper, [Harry T. Schmidt](#), responds to the editor speaking on the Yale Center on Alcoholism Studies, mentioning that Sacramento was the second

city in the United States for alcoholism. The reader argues that San Francisco, St. Louis, and Kansas City don’t have slums that match Sacramento’s West End.

- It also speaks to Chief of Police [James Hicks](#)'s closing of 12th Street Mission and how individuals can receive aid without attracting “undesirables.”

❖ [“City Construction Permit Total Increases” Sun, May 15, 1960](#)

- The city building inspector estimated the value of redevelopment projects total

\$1,140,325. The source lists permits and estimated costs.

- With the city redevelopment, an ad encourages homeowners to “Remodel Now!

Save \$.” Strategic pinpointing for individualized redevelopment.

❖ [“Plans Unit Will Study Extending Slum Project” Fri, Aug 4, 1961](#)

- On Aug 3, the SCC voted 7-to-1 to study a proposal to add approximately 11 blocks to the West End project previously declared eligible for redevelopment.
- Councilman [Dain J. Domich](#) dissented, arguing that the plan should not be extended until construction on already cleared blocks is completed.
- This was part of a third and final project to complete the West End redevelopment.

❖ [“...House-Hunting Is Frustrating Work” Sun, Sep 28, 1969](#)

- A 1966 survey found that only 10% of the rentals available between Madison and Howe and Fair Oaks Boulevard were rented to Blacks.
- A spot check by *The Bee*, with Black and white participants inquiring about rentals, also showed that of the 20 buildings advertising rentals, 15 would not answer the Black inquirer.
- On one such occasion, the Black inquirer was told that no vacancies were available, and their white counterpart was told the same thing. However, the white reporter

was informed that vacancies would open within two weeks. That information was not shared with the Black inquirer.

- In another building off Arden Way, the Black inquirer found no vacancies while the white inquirer was eagerly told of two vacancies.
- Sacramento State College’s student body president, [Steve Whitmore](#), told *The Bee* he and other students were planning a “serious campaign...against racial discrimination in apartment houses in the campus area.”
- The State Department of Employment observed, “This method simply says that the 1968 minority population is living in the same areas as the 1960 minority population, only a little closer together and, furthermore,

that some white people moved out of these areas during the 1960-1968 period.”

- The U.S. Department of Justice’s first housing discrimination suit on the West Coast was filed against Sacramento, not bigger cities like San Francisco or Los Angeles.
- [Leonard D. Cain Jr.](#), a Sacramento State College sociologist who studied the economic gains of Black Sacramentans in the 1950s and 60s, noted that there was

a “sizable middle class.” Still, they had been “effectively blocked from movement into new subdivisions and many other middle-class neighborhoods.” Essentially, segregation created

ghettos, “a neighborhood you cannot escape.”

- “Certainly, such an attitude reflects progress from 10 years ago, when the major sources of housing for Negroes were limited exclusively to Oak Park, Del Paso Heights and two streets in South Land Park. It is progress, to, from the [Sacramento Board of Realtors] stand in favor of Proposition 14, against equal opportunity housing (though it denies a racial motivation).”
- Assistant City Manager Walter Slipe projected the 1970s census to show a “trend toward a ‘colored’ central city ringed by white suburbs, which are now exploring possible incorporation.”
- Public housing provided some promise. Four housing projects were under construction, with 12-29% of the 521 units planned for Black residents.
- The “new urban renewal approach” was planned for neighborhoods like **DPH**, Washington, Oak Park, Glen Elder, Southside, and Gardenland.

❖ [“not without fear: redevelopment: a history of ‘urban removal,’” Jeff Raimundo et al, Sun,](#)

[Jun 14, 1970](#)

- “A group of Del Paso Heights residents has told city officials in no uncertain terms the federal government can keep its \$1.1 million if pouring it into redevelopment of the community will mean moving long-time residents out of the neighborhood.”
- Despite fears tied to the displacement of residents from the West End, the **SRA**

pushed for a different situation with the redevelopment of DPH.

- Their recognition of worries provides a historical association between the agency and minority Sacramentans’ mistrust of redevelopment projects. The city failed them with the West End, and this source suggests they feared the city would fail them again in the community redevelopment relegated them to.
- **SRA** executive **Robert Bradford** promised the redevelopment would look different, quoted as saying, " It won’t be the bulldozer type of redevelopment

we've had in the past. In the west end, it was strictly a clearance project.”

- Bradford’s comment also confirms earlier claims that West End redevelopment aimed to clear for industrial projects and “slum” clearance, including the residents labeled as such. They were not in consideration when redeveloping the West End.
- While Bradford’s deputy charged the city had “no problems relocating families,”

West End native who moved to Oak Park **Vincent Thompson** claimed that poor Black families were forced into worse living conditions in Oak Park because “real estate interests wouldn’t show them homes elsewhere and lending institutions wouldn’t lend them money to buy anywhere else.”

- Del Paso Heights residents' fears echoed their experiences of being displaced from the West End.

The Sacramento Union

❖ [“Second Mall Plan Urged In West End,” Tue, Apr 11, 1950](#)

- A second mall was a potential plan for the urban redevelopment program for Sacramento’s West End.
- It was also proposed that in addition to regular family rental units, thought should go into dormitories to house the single men and women workers who lived in the West End.
 - Continued warnings of the displacement of single men were also echoed throughout the primary sources by concerned community leaders and

citizens. Again, these single men were often labeled as “undesirables” primarily due to vagrancy and drinking to justify their displacement.

❖ [“Center Sought As Play Area In West End” Wed, Apr 12, 1950](#)

- The inclusion of a community center in the urban redevelopment plans for the West End of Sacramento was requested by the City Planning Commission by the Lincoln Neighborhood Council for a place for the 1500 adolescents living in the West End.

❖ [“Slum Clearing Election Delay To Be Asked” Sun, May 16, 1954](#)

- A group of landlords, merchants, and residents in the West End Redevelopment area sought to meet on June 15, 1954, to request a delay.
- Spokesperson **Sol Anapolsky** stated on behalf of the group, “There are still too many flaws in the plans. What are they going to do about the

churches? How about the Japanese-Americans who suffered greatly some 12 years ago[?] How about the merchants of the lower end who have contributed to the city’s growth and economy? How about the Chinese people, many of whom have been in the same area for 100 years? The Negro and the Mexican, likewise, haven’t been considered in the planning.”

- Anapolsky continued to the Union, “The Negro, the Mexican, and others face the same problem. The areas to which they can move are highly restricted against, if they choose to buy. If they wish to rent, they will have to pay considerably more rent. If they become dispersed and no

neighborhood could be found for them, patronage to their neighborhood-owned stores would also cease, and people would be forced out of business.”

❖ [“City Official Notice. Ordinance No 1868, Fourth Series” Jul 30, 1954](#)

- Announcement of the Capitol Mall Area redevelopment plan, justified by no business or persons offering an alternative strategy and due to “Findings, based on reports of the Redevelopment Agency of the City of

Sacramento and the City Planning Commission, showing the extent and character of blight, obsolescence, and substandard conditions in the area and their injurious and detrimental effects upon the public health, safety, and general welfare...”

- This states that the West End was “detrimental upon the public health, safety, and general welfare” but allowed minority residents to be pushed into communities with substandard living conditions that predated their displacement. The city, *The Bee*, and *The Union* used public health and well-being to justify redevelopment for business, industry, and city competition. Redevelopment did not improve the

health or safety of displaced West End residents.

- The source states that “in order to effectuate the State policy relating to redevelopment, the general scope of redevelopment methods has been broadly

defined by the Community Redevelopment Law.” One requirement of this law is the “relocation of occupants of housing facilities displaced through redevelopment.”

- This law allowed redevelopment and protected citizens. Under this same law, it is the City of Sacramento’s burden to compensate and alleviate damages from redevelopment.

❖ [“Urge Fairness In West End,” Wed, Aug 11, 1954](#)

- West End residents and businesspeople composed the United Council for Civic Rights to encourage non-discrimination policy in the redevelopment areas.
- Jack Shelby, the president of the group, told the paper, “If a Negro or people of Japanese or Chinese descent, try to purchase land, they should be treated as anyone else.”

❖ [“West End: Families Living in Squalid Area Would Much Prefer to Be Living Elsewhere”](#)

[Tom Evans, Fri, Oct 22, 1954](#)

- The Doe family, a Black family of seven (James, Harriet, and their five children), lived in a two-bedroom house in the West End that lacked heating, hot water in most of the house, and holes that allowed heat to escape in the winters.
- While the paper positions the West End as the problem, Evans states, “The Does family estimates they could pay \$50 or \$60 a month for rent, but they have no luck in trying to find a better place.”
 - The problem for Black residents wasn’t only the conditions of West End housing but that they couldn’t find other housing. This source

shows, again, that the West End was a ghetto created by real estate and lending agencies.

❖ [“West End: Some Merchants Will Follow Their Customers,” Tom Evans, Sun, Oct 24,](#)

[1954](#)

- *The Union* interviewed West End business owners to get their take on redevelopment.
- One owner mentioned that they weren’t against redevelopment if they “get a fair deal” and weren’t “shoved out just to let the big money boys make a killing.”
- The paper also mentions that many of the 312 business operators in the planned redevelopment area wanted to follow where their clientele would be relocated since they geared their business model towards specific low-income patronage.
- “For most the tie is with the customer, not the location.”
 - Failure to relocate residents of the West End means a failure to relocate businesses of the West End.
- The paper notes the opinions of many business owners, notably a female Chinese hotel operator, a Japanese restaurant owner, and a female Mexican shop operator.

❖ [“The Sacramento Union Recommends,” Fri, Oct 29, 1954](#)

- This source provides proposals and *The Union*’s voting recommendations.
- On (B) West End Redevelopment, the paper recommends voting yes.
 - Substantiates Caesar’s claims of a media blitz in support of Redevelopment.

❖ [“Slum, Bus Plan Before Voters” Sun, Oct 31, 1954](#)

- The Sacramento Advisory Committee planned to address the relocation of

residents and the labor market as part of the West End's redevelopment.

❖ [“Why Do 90,000 Sacramentans Urge YOU to Vote YES on Slum Clearance – Prop. B?”](#)

[Citizens Redevelopment Committee, Sun, Oct 31, 1954](#)

- “Crime, disease, fire hazards, physical and moral decay in Sacramento’s West End have become so intolerable that an aroused citizenry is demanding action for slum clearance.”
 - Again, the citizens called for changes for the betterment of citizens, but the redevelopment plans were primarily commercially focused with the Capitol

Mall project and the garage structures. This isn’t improving the morality of Sacramento; it is just pushing those living in harsh conditions elsewhere.

- The paper also listed all the organizations that endorsed redevelopment.
- “This Project Will NOT Increase Your Taxes It Will More Than PAY FOR ITSELF!”

❖ [“The Way Cleared,” Wed, Nov 24, 1954](#)

- Speaks about the *Berman v. Parker*, 348 U.S. 26 (1954) ruling.¹⁷ While the case did not originate in Sacramento, it allowed West End redevelopment to be done without delay.
- “On Monday, the United States Supreme Court ruled that cities such as Sacramento have a right to acquire rundown property for redevelopment and then sell or lease it to private operators.”
- *The Union* claimed the SCC no longer had any legal barriers to prevent redevelopment.
 - This provided legal standing for the SRA against the Community Redevelopment Law, as the city’s federal burden only required them to prove the dwellings were rundown, not relocation requirements. However, the SRA still received federal funds for relocation.

❖ [“Old Houses Face Ax in West End Project” Fri, Jan 18, 1957](#)

- Two “old homes” and “three other old structures” were torn down so that Sacramento could build “gleaming new store buildings, hotels, apartments, and office buildings.”
 - The face of the West End is changing from homes to “gleaming new store buildings, hotels, apartments, and office buildings.
 - Speaks to *Berman v. Parker* case.

❖ [“Slums Body Seeks Low Cost Homes” Thu, Jan 24, 1957](#)

- SRA called for 100 new or rebuilt low-cost housing units for slum clearance relocation.

❖ [“Redevelopment Agency ‘West End Slums Not Our Problem,’” Tue, Feb 19, 1963](#)

- The SRA members agreed on Mon, Feb 18, 1963, that the homeless problem and “floaters” impacted by redevelopment was a social problem “and that the agency was not designed to cure social problems.”

¹⁷William Orville Douglas and Supreme Court Of The United States, U.S. Reports: *Berman v. Parker*, 348 U.S. 26, 1954, Periodical, <https://www.loc.gov/item/usrep348026/>.

- Agency member H. Harold Leavey mentioned, “Redevelopment has met its legal and moral obligations and while there are social problems the

Redevelopment Agency is not designed to cure social problems.”

- The federal government allotted \$15,000 to the SRA for relocation studies and to help those who have “lived in this area for some time” find new housing after redevelopment.
 - The agency was provided with federal funds to relocate West End residents but claimed it was not responsible for relocation. By the Community Redevelopment Law and the acceptance of federal funds for displaced

residents, the SRA, whether developed for it or not, assumed responsibility for West End residents the moment their ground was struck.

❖ [“Misery in West End Attacked By Sociologists Critical of City” Fri, Feb 22, 1963](#)

- Two Sacramento State College sociologists, Dr. Leonard D. Cain, and Dr. George

Herrington, publicly called out the city for not adequately considering the single men uprooted from their “flophouses” after redevelopment and without anywhere to go for shelter or housing.

- Dr. Cain stated, “We have not sought to rehabilitate individuals, but rather have sought to refurbish physical property. The urban redevelopment program as locally implemented has

emphasized material advantages rather than human comfort and protection from disease, exposure to the elements and starvation.”

- Cain also pointed out that minority families were also being impacted and uprooted because of “urban removal.”
 - This points to an extended history of Sacramento’s treatment of the homeless population in connection with the Black population. It is important to note that Japanese residents once owned many businesses in redevelopment areas before the Japanese exclusion. Many of these businesses, after exclusion, were bought or run by Black residents until redevelopment.

Housing and Real Estate

This section covers early connections between housing and real estate and the displacement of West End residents to **DPH** and Oak Park. The displacement of Black residents from the West End and their forced migration to **DPH** and Oak Park is rooted in the broader history of racial segregation and economic marginalization in Sacramento, aided and often supported by the city of Sacramento and its appointed committees like the **SRA** which played a significant role in the West End's renewal. Urban redevelopment in Sacramento during the 1950s and 1960s focused on prioritizing economic development over social equity. Sacramento historians have documented the **SRA**'s focus on "revitalizing the West End" without adequately addressing the needs of displaced residents.

James Michael Williams's thesis, "West End Boys: Urban Redevelopment and the Elimination of Sacramento's Skid Row," details how urban renewal policies, which often ignored the needs of low-income and minority citizens, led to the displacement of these residents from the West End. "While skid row residents accessed a number of city, county, and private social services in the 1950s and early 1960s, there is no indication in the available sources that the appropriate agencies and organizations in Sacramento implemented these in the **LMA** as a coordinated, long-term program for the eradication of skid row. Instead, **SRA** continued a plan of demolition and inconsistent assisted relocation without the benefit of a concerted social services strategy or, in many cases, with little thought of providing new homes for displaced residents."¹⁸ The **SRA** prioritized demolition and urban renewal over human costs, making Sacramento's "urban renewal" more of "urban removal" than anything else.

¹⁸ James M. Williams, "West End Boys: Urban Redevelopment and the Elimination of Sacramento's Skid Row," Master's thesis, California State University, Sacramento (2013), 59.

Similarly, in the thesis, "The Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency Records:

Development in Downtown Sacramento, 1960s to 1990s,” Jason Partida looks specifically at the role of the **SHRA** in transforming Sacramento's urban West End. The thesis details how redevelopment plans neglected the needs of low-income minority residents, leading to their relocation to areas like **DPH** and Oak Park. As Partida said,

“In many ways, the **SHRA** aimed to resolve the past negligence of the city in providing an insufficient number of dwellings for the displaced residents of former blighted areas. As a response, the agency assumed a more active role with Sacramento’s housing problem. Like the rest of the nation, those afflicted by slum clearance were of a low-income background or of an ethnic and racial group living in a minority-dense neighborhood.”¹⁹

While the **SHRA**, newspapers, and the city framed redevelopment as a necessary step towards modernization, it often further marginalized already vulnerable Sacramento communities.

The “Sacramento African American Experience History Project, Historic Context Statement” provides a broad history of the Black community in Sacramento, further indicating the connection between redevelopment and Black displacement to **DPH** and Oak Park. The document details the growth of the Black population, primarily concentrated in the West End, and the eventual displacement. The authors claim, “The displacement of Black and minority-owned businesses from the West End resulted in the emergence of new concentrations of Black-owned businesses in neighborhoods to the north, south, and east of Central City, such as Oak Park and Del Paso Heights.”²⁰ All of these Sacramento historians charge that there is a noticeable correlation between the City of Sacramento-sponsored and supported West End redevelopment and the

¹⁹ Jason Partida, “The Sacramento Housing & Redevelopment Agency Records: Development in Downtown Sacramento, 1960s to 1990s,” Master’s thesis, California State University, Sacramento (2018), 41.

²⁰ Danmany M. Fisher, Page & Turnbull “Sacramento African American Experience History Project- Historic Context Statement,” (Historic Context Statement, City of Sacramento, 2023), 60.

displacement of Black citizens. The sources in this section seek to substantiate these claims and provide background on the subsequent ghettoization of said communities.

❖ [“Del Paso Heights CC Will Discuss Branch Bank Possibilities” Tue, Jan 10, 1950.](#)

- Discussions about opening the first bank in the DPH district took place on Thursday, Jan 12, 1950, a potential lead for learning about lending practices for housing in **DPH**.

❖ [“Del Paso Heights Church Will Form” Sat, Jan 14, 1950](#)

- A Southern Baptist Church opened in **DPH** for its first service on Friday, 20, 1950.

❖ [“Del Paso CC Hires Petition Solicitors” Fri, Feb 3, 1950](#)

- The Del Paso CC hired 12 persons to solicit 900 signatures for incorporation for the area. This resolution was one of five; the others included civic organization unity, drawing new businesses into the area, a cleanup, and sponsoring **DPH** youth

activities.

❖ [“Announcing Resumption of Sale Parker Homes Terrace in Del Paso Heights Near North Sacramento,” Sat, Feb 11, 1950](#)

- Two hundred ninety-six single-family homes for sale, recognizing the priority of sales through the Public Housing Administration of Veteran Service, displaying the early development of homes in **DPH**.

❖ [“City Will Probe Housing Discrimination Charge,” Fri, Jan 4, 1952](#)

- The city was set to investigate complaints that the Sacramento City and County Housing Authorities discriminate against Black families in the assignment of housing units in public housing.
- **Myra West** of the NAACP argued that proof of segregation and discrimination is apparent through the New Helvetia public housing, where of the 310 units,

only 16 were available to Blacks.

❖ [“Discrimination Housing Suit Is Broadened,” Sat, Feb 12, 1955](#)

- The suit initially only charged the Sacramento builders. As of this publication, the suit broadened to accuse Sacramento's entire building and real estate agency of conspiracy against selling homes to Black Sacramentans.
- Nathaniel S. Colley claimed their actions violated the National Housing Act, state public policy, and the 14th Amendment.
- Oliver A. Ming, Colley, and the NAACP sought a judgment from the court declaring that any builder or broker may not use federal assistance to build homes and then use racial discrimination to sell said housing.
- Ming also sought \$11,000 in damages.

❖ [“Judge Ponders Issues In Negro Housing Suit,” Mon, May 9, 1955](#)

- James H. Oakley heard arguments for and against a motion to rule out part of the

Ming suit for consideration after being requested by attorney William P. Dwyer Jr., representing the builders.

- “Colley told Judge Oakley that where public funds are involved, such as federal housing administration insured loans, congress in passing the legislation implicitly holds under the 14th and 5th Amendments to the constitution that all personal are

guaranteed due process and equality including no discrimination as to race, color or creed.”

❖ [“Colored Family Want to Buy Home in Del Paso Heights” Fri, Jan 18, 1957](#)

- A Black family was looking for a home in DPH for under \$9,000.

❖ [“Home Builders Go On Trial In Suit By Negro” Thu, Jan 10, 1957](#)

- Nathaniel S. Colley, representing plaintiff Oliver A. Ming, a Black man, sued the Sacramento Home Builders due to racial discrimination.
- Ming was a worker at McClellan Air Force Base. When he attempted to buy a home in the developing area near the base, he was refused despite the loans being obtained under the provision of the National Housing Act, which prohibits discrimination

regarding race.

- This case was one of the first such court cases in Sacramento country.
- The builders argued they had the constitutional right to refuse to sell their property for any reason.

❖ [“Negroes Testify To Being Denied New Home Deals” Sat, Jan 12, 1957](#)

- Four prospective new home buyers (Mrs. James Newson, James Logan, Tommy Jones, and

Elzoria Clarke) testified in the *Ming v. Sacramento Home Builders* case, stating they, too, were turned away from purchasing a home solely because of their race.

- Mrs. Newson was told, “We just can’t sell you people a home in this tract...It would hurt our business.”
- She was in the market because the city was destroying her home for a new freeway.

❖ [“Realtor Denies Race Issue In Suit By Negro” Mon, Jan 14, 1957](#)

- Frank MacBride Jr., a realtor, denied that his firm told realtors to deny homebuyers for race reasons.
- A few years earlier, MacBride and his firm refused to sell a home to Black deputy

parole officer **John Williams** in the Arden Oaks Vista Subdivision. They claimed it was due to an unsecured promissory note, not race.

❖ [“Builder Terms Negro Home Sale Agents’ Problem” Tue, Jan 15, 1957](#)

- **William G. Gannon**, a significant hand in building Sacramento homes, said he did not tell his sales agents to discriminate against Black Sacramentans. Since he did not directly tell them, he argued to Colley that the suit should be against sales

agents, not builders.

❖ [“Realty Company President Denies Sales Conspiracy” Wed, Jan 16, 1957](#)

- **Carroll B Cook**, president of the real estate firm Artz and Cook, testified there was no conspiracy to deny Black residents from buying homes as it went against the National Association of Real Estate Boards’ code of ethics.
- However, none of the 800 homes under Cook’s four subdivisions had been sold to Blacks. He further argued that houses, specifically in a trial subdivision in **DPH**, for low-income housing had been sold to Blacks in the past.

❖ [“Colored Family Want to Buy Home in Del Paso Heights” Fri, Jan 18, 1957](#)

- A Black family looks for a home in **DPH** for under \$9,000.

❖ [“Judge Awards \\$1 To Negro In Realty Suit” Mon, Jun 23, 1958](#)

- **James H. Oakley** awarded \$1 in damages to **Oliver A. Ming** but found that the evidence failed to support claims of conspiracy to prevent the sale of homes to Blacks.
- Oakley was quoted saying, “There was no conspiratorial agreement here. It was in essence a set of individual and unrelated efforts to maintain the status quo as far as

disposition of new tract homes was concerned. There was concert of action only in that each defendant had the same ideas he always had been taught, and if they were mistaken it was because concepts had changed and the courts themselves had previously been mistaken as to what the law was.” If a law is broken because of a mistake, is it still not a broken law?

❖ [“Panelists’ Views Conflict On Segregation In Housing,” Wed, Mar 25, 1959](#)

- A panel of experts met on Mar 24, 1959, to discuss housing segregation in Sacramento.
- Ed Bussey, a Black real estate agent, said it was so difficult to find housing when he moved in 1953 that Sacramento was “one of the worst cities in the state in the matter of housing discrimination.”
- Nathaniel S. Colley, a Sacramento lawyer, defended Sacramento, stating that the Black community is dispersed, and that integration was well underway, as shown by the 14 Black families and their supportive neighbors in the South Land Park area.
- Joan Feast of SRA said, “90 percent of the families who have left the redevelopment area have better housing today.” She added, “They are paying from \$10 to \$15 more in monthly rent.”

❖ [“Tour Stresses Dilemmas Of Minority Housing,” Sandra Littlewood, Sun, Dec 18, 1960](#)

- A busload of ministers, real estate agents, and interested citizens with the Sacramento Council of Churches Housing Committee toured the New Helvetia housing projects, Swanston Palms, Oak Park, and DPH while discussing the problems of minority access to homes.
- Participants observed that panic selling depreciated a home/neighborhood,

not the presence of Black families alone.

- “The redevelopment of the west end has led to a concentration of Negro families in Oak Park and in that sense, redevelopment has not succeeded.”
- First English Lutheran Church in Oak Park, [Rev. W. Morgan Edwards](#) mentioned that the West End’s redevelopment displaced many families to Oak Park.

❖ [“Minority Housing,” Sat, Feb 4, 1961](#)

- Chairman of the council’s housing committee, [Grace Catterall](#), and professor of

sociology at Sacramento State, [Dr. Leonard Cain](#), met to discuss a planned bus tour that explored minority housing.

- “The purpose of the trip is to study the problems minorities encounter in renting and buying housing.”

❖ [“SSC Prof Says Segregation In City Increases,” Mon, May 22, 1961](#)

- [Dr. Leonard D. Cain Jr.](#) identified that the 1960 census figures show evidence of increased segregation between 1950-1960.
- Dr. Cain mentioned, “It is abundantly clear... that Oak Park has replaced the redeveloped west end as Sacramento’s new downtown Negro community, with a concentration of Negroes not previously experienced in the west end.”
- Cain blamed real estate firms, lending agencies, and home sellers as perpetrators of keeping Blacks from purchasing and renting in “white neighborhoods.”
- In 1950, the most significant group of Blacks was in the West End, where the Black population was 23.7%. By 1960, this concentration had moved to Oak Park, with 42.7% of the neighborhood being Black, compared to only 6.8%

in 1950.

- In 1950, there were 4,538 Blacks within old municipal boundaries, an increase of 3,824, with 74% of the net gain going to Oak Park. Whether displaced or new to the city, Black residents were segregated into Oak Park, the “new West End.”
- These statistics and Dr. Cain’s claims support the connection between redevelopment and the ghettoization of Oak Park, as Black residents had nowhere else to buy.
 - While the redlining was acted out by real estate firms, lending agencies, and home sellers, SRA did not adequately address segregation and relocation.

❖ [“Oriental Fares Better Than Negro In Housing Bias” Sat, Sep 9, 1961](#)

- The 1960s census showed that the 833,861 Blacks in California had a more challenging time integrating than their Asian and Hispanic counterparts.
- “Minority housing in the state is largely a Negro problem, and the problem is widespread,” said a report released on Sep 9, 1961, by the United States Commission on civil rights.
- The paper states the unsubstantiated fears of Black neighbors causing property value to decrease was one of the main reasons for other minority’s acceptance into white neighborhoods before Blacks.
- The paper also posits that “negro segregation ‘seems to be augmented, rather than alleviated by urban renewal projects’ even though financing is contingent on safeguards against discrimination.
- Sacramento is lauded in the report for having “a small number of Negroes”

as “members of the realty boards.”

❖ [“Viewpoint Makes Difference In Fair Housing Law Issue,” Clark Biggs, Wed, Dec 18,](#)

[1963](#)

- AB 1240 (Rumford Act) was passed and sent to Governor Edmund G. Brown for a signature, immediately spurring a repeal campaign.

- The hums of repeal immediately prepared the NAACP for a legal battle, as repeal would remove property rights for Black Sacramentans.

- NAACP president Rev. Cyrus Keller Sr. told *The Bee*, “All you have to do is look at a map and you will see what I mean... The Negroes live in two places, mainly, Del Paso Heights and Oak Park. These are ghettos if my definition is correct.”

❖ [“Oak Parkers Refuse To Give Up Hope,” Mon, Jun 19, 1967](#)

- “During redevelopment of the West End,” civic leader Vincent Thompson told the *Bee*, “Disadvantaged families, particularly Negroes, were forced to move to substandard housing in Oak Park because ‘real estate influences wouldn’t show

them homes elsewhere and lending influences wouldn’t lend them money to buy anywhere else.”

- Thompson furthered that the city’s promises of housing for the dispossessed families from the West End had not been fulfilled.
- This article also mentions that landlords kept rental rates high because they knew tenants could not move elsewhere, trapping them in Oak Park.

❖ [“DPH, Oak Park Unrest Is Aired,” Fri, Jul 28, 1967](#)

- DPH and Oak Park City Council met to discuss “racial unrest.”

❖ [“Groups In Oak Park Will Seek Jobs, Businesses,” Wed, Aug 2, 1967](#)

- Committees were formed to improve Black employment and open more possibilities for Black-owned businesses.
 - Through economic upliftment, the committees hoped to end unrest and violence in Oak Park.

❖ [“Special Unit Seeks Community Improvements,” Thu Sep 7, 1967](#)

- Since the 1960 census, the Black population in Oak Park grew 45%, while the white population decreased 24%.
- In the same period, the black population grew 36% in Del Paso Heights, and the white population increased by 3%.
- A month after Proposition 14 was passed, the Sacramento Real Estate Board announced they would discipline any realtor that practiced discrimination or engaged in “‘blockbusting,’ the scheme to cause a flurry of sales and Realtor

commissions by the actual or pretend sale of property in all-white neighborhoods to a member of a minority race.”

- In August 1966, a leader in an apartment house owners group resigned because of members' resistance to integration.
- A City-County Chamber of Commerce criticized apartment house owners, claiming that 75-90% of them refused to sell to Blacks.
- The latest proposal, per the article from civil rights groups, was to build at least 6,000 units of low-rent public housing in minority communities.
- Dr. Leonard Cain called the plan “distinctiveness without exclusiveness.” He argued that Black residents deserved the right to live in

any neighborhood but often preferred to stay in areas “predominantly people with members of their own race and were demanding better municipal services to improve their surroundings.”

❖ [“New Urban League Chief Raps ‘Willful Ignorance’,” Don Ferrell, Sun, Aug 25, 1968](#)

- **Howard Harris**, executive director of the Urban League, told the *Bee* that Sacramento had many of the same racial issues that plagued the rest of the country.
- Howard “cites the lack of adequate housing and jobs, prejudice and ‘willful ignorance’ among some officials” for the issues that the Black Sacramento population faced.
- He also mentioned, however, that Sacramento had a lot of room to grow as it didn’t have as “definable” of a Black community or “ghetto” as did neighboring cities like Oakland and San Francisco.
- As for willful ignorance of officials, Howard charged, “All of the ingredients that call for frustration are here... In fact, it might even be more intensified because of the seeming lack of awareness by many who should know about the frustration that exists.”
- Further, Howard mentioned that the lack of Black leaders in Sacramento kept the community down. “There is not, in the Oak Park community, nearly enough definable black male leadership.”
 - Howard's later quote contradicts his assertion that there is no “definable” Black community (as well as many other accounts pointing to Oak Park and **DPH**), as he pointedly picks Oak Park as a place in need of Black leadership.

- “And government officials should consider urban redevelopment outside the downtown area. Redevelopment should also include providing adequate housing,

for the low and middle income people and for the elderly... The Negro must be given enough positive things to work with. Officials must be more sensitive and pay more attention to what we’re saying to them.”

❖ [“Capital Moves Slowly Toward Open Housing,” Sun, Sep 1, 1968](#)

- The opinions of Black real estate agents and brokers in Sacramento, like that of

George Seabron, seemed optimistic about changes in Sacramento for housing. The *Bee* stated agents like Seabron believed, “Progress toward open housing for Negroes in the Sacramento area is coming about through a gradual change in attitudes by whites and the policies of such government agencies as the Federal Housing Administration and the Veterans Administration.”

- Seabron mentioned that Oak Park, Del Paso Heights, and a couple of streets in South Land Park were the primary sources of homes for Black residents. Aside from these, Black Sacramentans could be seen on a “token basis” in other parts of

the city where, in the 50s, they could not live.

- According to Black agents, the moral attitudes of residents were a major necessary step.
- As for how segregation could continue despite laws, Seabron mentioned that Black residents didn’t have the time or funds to go into lengthy legal battles, and no one enforced federal laws.
- Many ways in which Black families were discriminated against in Sacramento were hidden. As Seabron explained, builders often told Black buyers that

development

was sold out six months before, so they could not build for them. Further, it was difficult for Black buyers to get a home in a new neighborhood, but once it was more developed, it was easier for them to buy. The paper speculated that this was due to white families being reluctant to buy homes if Black residents were already established in the neighborhood before their purchase.

- Renting for Black families was no easier than buying. As Seabron said, “Rentals have changed a little. People just don’t want to rent to families with children. Many families are living in two-bedroom homes with four or five.”

❖ [“Yale Was Wrong About Joe Cooper,” George Williams, Sun, Feb 23, 1969](#)

- Joe Cooper was a Black business owner of Cooper Realty.
- Cooper claimed that the most significant effect of the civil rights movement was that it had become acceptable for whites to engage in business and professional transactions with Black people.
- Cooper decided to join the real estate field when he saw widespread discrimination.
- “Cooper noticed two significant developments among Negroes in housing: The influx of Negro families into the south area and into Oak Park.”
- “Cooper says the myth about property values depreciating when Negroes move into a previously all-white neighborhood.”

❖ [“Oak Park Building Venture Provides New Approach To Public Housing,” Sun, Apr 13,](#)

[1969](#)

- Jesse Brown, a Black contractor, began working on three four-bedroom public housing homes in Oak Park that week.

- The houses were set to be leased to the Sacramento City-County Housing Authority.
- The authority also oversaw other projects in different parts of Sacramento. As of the article, they had 1,000 leases for affordable housing with the hope of rent-to- own for the families.

❖ [“City Tentatively Selects Developers For 710 Low-Income Housing Units,” Fri, Jun 20,](#)

[1969](#)

- The Sacramento City Housing Authority was tentatively choosing developers for 710 of 800 units for low-income elderly and disabled residents.
- Some units were set to be constructed in DPH and Oak Park.

❖ [“Marriott Keeps His Cool,” Sat, Jun 21, 1969](#)

- Mayor Richard Marriott of Sacramento toured Oak Park after racial riots broke out in the neighborhood the week prior.
- “The overwhelming fact about Oak Park is that it’s a neighborhood which has been allowed to deteriorate while the city failed repeatedly to apply for funds for decent low-cost housing.”
- Oak Park's neglect is noted as the “high cost housing in the redevelopment area.” The same area many of these Black families were kicked out of and pushed into Oak Park.
- The paper charges that only “recently” had the city begun seeking funds for low- cost housing.

❖ [“Sacramento Began As A Racial ‘Mix,’” Sun, Sep 28, 1969](#)

- As of 1969, with 6,000 Black residents being added to Sacramento due to the

DPH annexation, 8.1% of Sacramento's population was Black.

- “Redevelopment of the riverfront west end halted the city’s deterioration at that traditional entrance to the Capital, but it hastened blight’s progress elsewhere. Coupled with long-established techniques creating virtually segregated housing,

urban renewal sharply increased the concentration of minorities in certain, more clearly defined areas of the city and county.”

- De facto segregation was reflected in public schools and bussing.
- Similarly, *The Bee* charges Sacramento residents' attitudes. “Attitudes created de facto segregation in housing, which created it in the schools which created it in employment. The techniques are executed unconsciously by many members of Sacramento’s so-called majority and consciously by a few convicted racists.”
- A Black mother who migrated from Louisiana to Sacramento told reporters, “At home, you knew whites didn’t like you; they told you so. But here, whites will smile in your face, but really they don’t like you.”

❖ [“Oak Park,” Tom Arden, Sun, Sep 28, 1969](#)

- The article details Oak Park's history, noting that West End redevelopment led to many Black families resettling in Oak Park.
- It then details how Oak Park “slid” into a ghetto, “a ‘neighborhood’ without an exit.”
- **Fred Steen**, owner of a closing tavern, told *The Bee* it was the city’s fault. “It’s a crying shame, and that’s what makes me angry. The city deserted Oak Park, and now it’s getting its just desserts.”

- Rev William Ellis of Oak Park Catholic Church told the paper, “Oak Park is a child of Sacramento, and the child needs the parent.”

❖ [“Capital’s Poor Housing Shocks Women Voters” Fri, Nov 7, 1969](#)

- Thirty-five women in the California League of Women Voters toured homes in Southside, Glen Elder, Oak Park, **DPH**, Gardenland, and Washington and were shocked at the state of many of the dwellings.
- “The women were chagrin to find one particular dwelling which had been split into 13 substandard living units. They noted that the landlord pays only \$300 a year in taxes for the property, but collects over 20 times that amount in rent.”
- With relocation in mind, the city chose primarily vacant land and some commercial properties. Only five families were required to move for the project.

❖ [“Housing For Elderly In Oak Park May Lead To Other Projects There,” Sun, Oct 4, 1970](#)

- Harry E. Zollinger, executive director for the Sacramento Housing Authority (SHA), told *The Bee* he hoped the Oak Park apartment project would encourage private developments in the area.
- Zollinger said, “I hope that others will follow suit to demonstrate that there is a market for new construction to meet the needs of Oak Park residents.”
- Two Black realtors, James Dodd and Al Hollis, developed the group of apartments, and A-1 Construction Co., a “minority group firm,” was the contractor.
- The SHA was set to provide 800 housing units for the elderly under the program.

❖ [“Public Housing Ends Race Ban” Thu, Dec 27, 1951](#)

- Housing projects in Dos Rios Homes planned to stop segregating after New Helvetia Homes and River Oaks opened. The latter opened 100 units to “minority” families and scheduled to open another 300 by spring 1952.
- **Albert H. Becker**, executive director of the city and country housing authorities, “denies there was discrimination against making housing available to minority groups but said there was a policy of segregation.”
- **Reverend L Sylvester Odom** (president of the Sacramento NAACP branch) argued that segregation was a form of discrimination, thus rendering houses unavailable to the Black community. “The position of our branch is—as long as segregation remains in any of our public housing projects, discrimination is inevitable.”

❖ [“Group Sue to Prevent Negro Ban in Housing” Sat, Feb 02, 1952](#)

- **Nathaniel S. Colley** takes up a suit against **Albert H. Becker**, City Manager **Bartley**

W. Cavanaugh, the city council, and the **SHA** on behalf of clients **Willie Franklin**,

Marion Reynolds, and **Norma Johnson**, who were scheduled to move into the project on

Mon, Feb 04, 1952.

❖ [“Housing Group Places Negroes In White Area” Tue, Mar 4, 1952](#)

- The **SHA** re-assigned another 16 Black families to move into the River Oaks project before April 1, 1952.
- The paper notes the project was “heretofore designated for use of white families

only” and that it came after a “threat by **Nathaniel S. Colley**, attorney for the Sacramento

Committee against Racial Segregation in Public Housing, to take his case into Federal Court.”

- Colley filed a temporary order against moving the families in on a segregated basis, but he removed the order since it would have prevented the 64 families from moving in.
- The new decision entails that 16 families planned to move to new units within “white” buildings, and those 16 units from the “black” buildings would be given to white families.
- **Colley Quote:** “This, of course, will still be a far cry from racial integration... But I’m convinced the commissioners and Mr. Dwyer are sincere when they say they are ready to put such a policy into effect. It is my understanding that other forces

are trying to impede this program... Thus, this reshuffle of 16 Negro families is very important. It is a beginning. As soon as it has been done, we shall have some very real integration in River Oaks.”

❖ [“‘Arm-waving’ Charged in Local Housing Bias,” Wed, May 24, 1961](#)

- A real estate spokesman charged **Dr. Leonard D Cain Jr.** with “arm waving.”
- Cain published statistics in the State Review, putting the blame on real estate agents for segregation and showing that Oak Park is the new “ghetto” after the redevelopment of the West End.
- “Cain said the middle-class Negro who has prospered and can afford better housing is blocked from moving into new subdivisions and many other middle-class neighborhoods.”

❖ [“28 March In South Land Park,” Sun, Jun 10, 1962](#)

- A group of residents staged a peaceful protest outside the South Land Park

Hills' recent builds due to real estate's firm discrimination towards Black families.

- Dr. Leonard D. Cain Jr. was a spokesman for the group. "This is a moral issue with us," Cain told *The Union*. "Our demonstration has no direct connection with the damage suit which had been filed."

❖ ["Negro Housing Record Lauded," Sat, Nov 24, 1962](#)

- Edmund B. Bussey Jr. said, "Negroes and other minorities do not lower property values in a white neighborhood, and Federal Housing Administration figures also show this."

❖ ["Oak Park Cleanup Launched," Wed, Jul 31, 1963](#)

- The Oak Park Neighborhood Council pushed to improve Oak Park by kicking off a "broom parade" to clean the neighborhood and prevent deterioration.
- Chilton Christian, co-head of the Council, said, "Several people from the West End moved here during the redevelopment project... We help them get used to a residential environment."

❖ ["Negroes Throughout City Despite Alleged Bias," Leonard Finder, Sat, Dec 28, 1963](#)

- "Real estate discrimination is highlighted by many Negroes as the main obstacle.

They argue that if they had complete freedom of choice of residence, then presumably they would be sufficiently scattered that no school would have an excessive preponderance of Negro students."

- Many residents and real estate agents disagreed, claiming it is their right to choose who they sell to.
- The paper tells of those large concentrations of Blacks lived in Oak Park,

Elder Creek, and Del Paso Heights.

❖ [“Housing Experiences Are Varied,” Leonard Finder, Sun, Dec 29, 1963](#)

- While Black families like Bessie Roy didn’t have problems finding housing in Oak

Park in the early 50s, Jesse Therd had a different experience. She told the paper, “Discrimination is very evident... I had to buy a house in a ‘ghetto’ neighborhood,

Glen Elder, from a Negro agent for that tract, after a well-known white realty firm would show me only places in Oak Park.”

- “While Negroes live in all types of city residential areas, some got into these neighborhoods only under special difficulties, or after experiences at least psychologically bruising and humiliating, if not embittering.”

❖ [“Some Have Unpleasant Experiences In Housing,” Sun, Dec 29, 1963](#)

- Finder stated that the issue of segregation in Sacramento was mainly caused by real estate brokers who used “evasive” tactics to keep Black persons from white neighborhoods.
- When Arnette Harfield, a Black storekeeper, tried to buy a home, agents would miss appointments or allege later that the house had already been sold. Harfield told Finder, “one agent told me frankly he couldn’t sell to me.”
- Robert R. Tyler, a Black sociologist, was disillusioned when sellers sounded excited to close and changed their behavior when they saw him in person. He bought a dimly lit house at eleven o’clock one night because that’s what the realtor

wanted to show him.

❖ [“Score: Improvement, Understanding Needed,” Leonard Finder, Wed, Jan 1, 1964](#)

- While white Sacramentans often thought segregation was “a compulsory separation, which they argue is not true,” Black Sacramentans differed, stating that housing and economic discrimination kept them congregated in neighborhoods like

Oak Park and **DPH**. The paper points out that the courts and city had not given any clear definition of “de facto segregation.”

❖ [“More Understanding Of Opinions Needed,” Leonard Finder, Wed, Jan 1, 1964](#)

- Oak Park was considered a low-income neighborhood long before the presence of Black residents, and the Black community of Oak Park led efforts to improve the area.
- The paper uses this to dispel the idea that property values drop if Blacks move into previously all-white neighborhoods.

❖ [“‘Creeping Blight’ In 5 Areas,” Tue, Jan 28, 1964](#)

- The Community Welfare Council presented a four-step program to curtail the spread of “urban blight” and “blocking potential deterioration into slums by five Sacramento neighborhoods.”
- The neighborhoods were Washington Neighborhood, Oak Park, Gardenland, Southside Neighborhood, and **DPH**.

❖ [“Agency Seeks \\$150,000 In Poverty Funds,” Wed, Aug 12, 1964](#)

- The Community Welfare Council requested \$150,000 in federal funds under a new anti-poverty program to aid Washington, Oak Park, Southside, **DPH**, and Gardenland.

❖ [“Joint Meeting on Fair Housing,” Tue, Jan 25, 1966](#)

- Sacramento Committee for Fair Housing and Oak Park Neighborhood

Council planned a meeting to discuss Black access to housing in a suburban area.

Sacramento Legal, Policy, and Organizational Anti-Discrimination

This section focuses on Sacramento's legal, policy, and organizational efforts to address housing discrimination, highlighting the pivotal role of attorney Nathaniel S. Colley. Colley tirelessly advocated for civil rights and integration for the Black community in Sacramento. As noted in previous sections, 20th-century Sacramento was entrenched in racial segregation and discrimination, and through legal and political advocates and policymakers like Colley, California made substantial legislative efforts against discrimination. California State government passed the Hawkins Act, the Unruh Civil Rights Act in 1959, and the Rumford Act in 1963. These acts were crucial in setting legal precedents for subsequent battles against discriminatory housing practices. The California Supreme Court's decision in *Mulkey v. Reitman* (1966) declared Article I, Section 26, colloquially known as Proposition 14 (1964)—an amendment that “repealed all existing legislative prohibitions of racial discrimination in private housing and reserved to the voters the exclusive power to legislate fair housing in the future”—as unconstitutional.²¹

The 1959 Hawkins Act and the Unruh Civil Rights Act represented significant strides in California's early legislative framework against discrimination. The Hawkins Act targeted racial discrimination in publicly assisted housing, while the Unruh Civil Rights Act extended these (and other) protections to businesses. In 1963, the Rumford Act added protections to prohibit racial discrimination in selling, renting, and financing housing. These acts were the big three in the housing discrimination protections in mid-twentieth century California.²² They occurred during

²¹ James M. Galbraith, “The Unconstitutionality of Proposition 14: An Extension of Prohibited ‘State Action,’” *Stanford Law Review* (1966), 232; Galbraith is incredibly pro prop. 14 but goes into precedents for the legislation

and chronology. His argument is that the enactment of Prop 14, while unfair, was a legitimate exercise of the democratic process for which the voters had a right. For his argument see: 242-253.

²² Galraith, 234-237.

the height of West End's redevelopment and the displacement of its residents, which is why Sacramento newspapers so heavily publicized Proposition 14, its supporters, and its opponents.

Proposition 14, passed in 1964 by a voter initiative, amended the California constitution to allow property owners to refuse to sell, lease, or rent their property to anyone at their discretion. Harlan Hahn details that the proposition not only permitted discrimination in housing, but white voters' choice to enact it reflected the deep-seated fear and resistance to racial integration even in "racially progressive" states and cities. Hahn notes that in the sixties,

"[A]t least eleven Northern cities and states have held referenda on civil rights issues. In eight of these cities or states, proposals in the interest of Negro citizens have been defeated by the voters. The results of recent ballots specific issues of discrimination, therefore, have provided little encouragement securing additional progress on civil rights by circumventing the legislative process through direct appeals to the people."²³

Immediately after its passage, detractors of the amendment, as seen in Colley's papers, began preparing attacks to have it appealed. Proposition 14 effectively systemized racial discrimination in the Californian property sector and reversed the work of California civil rights activists. The institutionalization of racial discrimination into California law made it an authorized and normalized practice, impacting the housing, business, and social opportunities of Blacks and other racial minorities. These sources aim to showcase, primarily through the work of Nathaniel S. Colley, the legal fight against discrimination in Sacramento during the redevelopment era.

²³ Harlan Hahn, "Norther Referenda on Fair Housing: The Response of White Voters," *University of Utah Western Political Science Association* (1968), 483.

❖ [“Judge Refuses To Reopen Union Action” Fri, Feb 17, 1950](#)

- Superior Judge B. F. Van Dyke refused to reopen the *Albert E. Bacon v. AFL Tile Setters Union* with the decision that no error was made in the original hearing, which held that Bacon was not entitled to membership.

“Through attorney Nathaniel S. Colley he contended the union refused to admit him because of race prejudice.”

- The union claimed rejection was due to a lack of union recommendations, not race.

❖ [“Defense Evidence is Due in Police Brutality Trial” Fri, Feb 24, 1950](#)

- Physicians came to court to report on the state of James Martin and Robert White, both suing the city of Sacramento for police misconduct.
- White had two confirmed fractured ribs.

❖ [“Union Requests Discrimination Charge Dismissal” Wed, Jul 26, 1950](#)

- Bricklayers and Tilesetters Union and the American Federation of Labor filed an action in the superior court to dismiss the discrimination from Bacon's complaint.
- On August 18, 1949, the court found no damages, so Colley amended the complaint and filed a motion to vacate the judgment. This was denied on February 14, 1950.

❖ [“Lawyers in Race Case are Told to Submit Briefs” Jan 18, 1957](#)

- This is an update to the Ming case and the judge’s call for briefs.
- The defense stated that the National Housing Act permits developers to

choose whom they sell their homes and does not prohibit race-based decisions.

❖ [“Colley Charges Housing Segregation” Tue, Mar 22, 1960](#)

- In a forum address, Nathaniel S. Colley charged the Sacramento Housing Authority (SHA) with maintaining segregationist practices and not paying enough attention to the displaced members of minority communities who struggled to find homes

partially due to segregation after they were moved from the West End.

- He further charged the federal government with not adequately promoting desegregated housing through its home-buying insurance practices.
- Colley stated, “I think it is immoral for the government to force people out of slum clearance areas and then make them face a closed market where they can only find slightly better slum facilities.”

❖ [“City Is Called Relatively Free of Racial Discrimination,” Sandra Littlewood, Wed, May](#)

[18, 1960.](#)

- Nathaniel S. Colley stated that aside from “two critical areas,” Sacramento is “comparatively free of racial segregation and discrimination.” Those areas of concern, however, were housing and employment.
- Colley claimed efforts had been made in housing, such as integrating New Helvetia and River Oaks public housing projects. Still, little success had been achieved in achieving proper integration in Sacramento.
- Colley charged that Sacramento only employed Blacks as garbage collectors. Black teachers were generally assigned to schools with a majority of students being recognized as minorities, and he had never personally met a Black

high school

teacher.

❖ [“Retiring Realtor Chief Attacks Housing Statute,” Fri, Sep 27, 1963](#)

- Provides insights on realtor opinions of the Rumford Act.
- The Rumford Act was meant to prohibit discrimination in the lease, rental, and sale of most housing in the state.

❖ [“State Bar Delegates Oppose Proposition 14,” Wed, Sep 30, 1964](#)

- State Bar Delegates met at the 37th annual State Bar Association, where they voted 304 to 124 to oppose Proposition 14.
- The paper posits that Proposition 14 would “nullify most of the Rumford Act barring housing discrimination and would prohibit state or local laws against housing discrimination in the future.”
- Nathaniel S. Colley drew cheers from the crowd when he charged, “We are in the midst of a revolution which touches all of us. If this body fails to take a stand on Proposition 14, it will by that action be taking a stand for it.”

❖ [“League Opposes 14,” Margaret Vanderlaan Fri, Oct 09, 1964](#)

- The League of Women Voters of California, a non-partisan organization, opposed Proposition 14 because
- Margaret Vanderlaan, the writer, said, “The league’s opposition to Proposition 14 is an affirmation of representative government and an application of the principle that responsible government should

share in the solution of economic and social problems which affect the general welfare. Housing discrimination does exist, creating many serious community problems which adversely affect all

citizens.”

The Sacramento Union

❖ [“Plans Appeal in Fight for Union Membership” Fri, Feb 17, 1950.](#)

- [Albert E. Bacon](#), a Black man, fought for nearly a year to force the AFL Tile Setters Union to admit him. Once they wouldn’t, he lost his job due to his inability to join the union. He sued the union for \$10,000 in damages.
- With his lawyer [Nathaniel S. Colley](#), he appealed to be denied for a second time.

❖ [“Police Abuse Suit Starts Against City” Tue, Feb 21, 1950.](#)

- Two Black men, [James Martin](#) and [Robert White](#), along with their attorney

[Nathaniel S. Colley](#), were suing the City of Sacramento for \$175,000 over police brutality.

- [Al Soulies](#) and [EV Engelbrite](#) were the accused officers of beating the men with a nightstick to get a “confession.”

❖ [“Bricklayers, Tilesetters Union Denies Racial Discrimination” Wed, Jul 26, 1950](#)

- [Nathaniel S. Colley](#) states that the Union must have been racist since his client, Bacon, had passed the contractor test and operated as a master tile setter, approved and licensed by state examiners, but was not allowed into the union.
- The union states racism cannot be a factor since they had two Black union members.

❖ [“Racial Group May Dissolve” Tue, Feb 5, 1952](#)

- The Committee Against Segregation in Public Housing met to discuss whether the 24-member organization should disband due to its success in recent desegregation policies that the Housing Authority announced they

would adhere to.

- The 64 Black residents who moved into the River Oaks Housing Projects on February 4 and the newly organized Sacramento Council for Civic Unity proved their successes and were set to replace the committee.

❖ [“Housing Heads Surrender on Racial Issue” Tue, Apr 1, 1952](#)

- On Mon, March 31, 1952, the SHA’s lawyer, W.P. Dwyer Jr., and Nathaniel S.

Colley met and agreed to “make a good faith effort to carry out a policy of racial integration,” which ended a five-month fight to maintain racial segregation.

- However, Virna Canson, the Committee Against Segregation in Public Housing, mentioned the “commissioners have done not one little thing to move any of the 64 segregated Negro families out of the area to which they were originally assigned.”

After nearly a month, the commission agreed to begin with 16 families trading places to begin integration efforts in the River Oaks Project.

- “The reference here was to the new-ans still not completed–River Oaks Project.

Although segregation is practiced in all other public housing communities around here the dispute has raged about this one place.”

❖ [“\\$10,000 Asked By Negro Girl in Race Case” Thu, Jun 19, 1952](#)

- Nathaniel S. Colley sues business owners for \$10,000 on behalf of Helen Jackson, a 14-year-old Black girl barred from the Land Park Plunge despite her classmates being allowed access on a class field trip.
- The defendants stated they “Have a practice of denying all persons of the Negro race admission to said premises, and unless restrained by an order of

this court will continue to do so, to the irreparable damage of plaintiff and other persons similarly situated who are desirous of entering said premises for amusement.”

❖ [“Negro Is Victor In Suit Over Use of Pool” Tue, Jul 15, 1952](#)

- Colley and Jackson won the case, receiving \$250 of the \$10,000 they initially sued for.
- Gilford Rowland, attorney for the pool, and Colley agreed to a stipulation against the barring of Blacks at any time to use Land Park Plunge. “All other swimming pools in the Sacramento area amidst members of all racial groups.”

❖ [“Hotel Owner Wins Deportation Delay” Fri, Oct 12, 1956](#)

- Chanan Din Khan, a hotel owner in the West End and Afghani immigrant, won a new delay to deportation that was spurred by allegations of tax evasion. Colley, attorney, argued it was not a deportable offense.
 - Potential lead for displaced business persons.

❖ [Apartment Ad Fri, Jan 18, 1957](#)

- It boasts a 3-bedroom apartment “specially for colored.”
 - Despite the aims of Colley and the NAACP, segregation was still present in 1957 Sacramento housing.

❖ [“Fair Housing Act Referendum Drive Tight Down to Wire,” Bert Clinkston, Wed, Sep 4,](#)

[1963](#)

- Conflicting reports existed on whether the Rumford Act would pass, but the paper charges that many supporters were confident it was possible.

- ❖ [“Notice of Public Hearing On Tentative Plan For Redevelopment of Project Area No. 2-A - Capitol Mall Area Prior To Submission Of Plan To City Council,” Fri, Mar 12, 1954](#)
 - Following the provisions of the Community Redevelopment Law, the **SRA** planned a hearing for Wednesday, April 14, 1954.
- ❖ [“Case Against 14 Is Based On One Issue” Tue, Nov 10, 1964](#)
 - The NAACP sought to challenge Proposition 14 “solely on the strength of its contention the amendment denies ‘equal protection of the laws’ to all Californians.”
 - Colley spoke for the NAACP, stating landlords could discriminate under Proposition 14.
- ❖ [“Large State Ballot Ahead For November,” Tue, Jul 07, 1964](#)
 - Provides the 17 propositions that California citizens would vote on in November of 1964.
 - States, “**Proposition 14**—an initiative constitutional amendment to nullify the Rumford Housing Act.”
- ❖ [“Constitutional Questions Plague State High Court,” Tue, Nov 17, 1964](#)
 - The paper points out that while the people voted for Proposition 14 by a 2:1 margin, doubt started swirling about constitutionality, which the State’s high court would determine.
- ❖ [“State Supreme Court To Hear Proposition 14 Case,” Tue, Feb 09, 1965](#)
 - A San Francisco lawsuit that attacked Proposition 14 advanced to the California Supreme Court.

- The original case was brought by Clifton Hill, through Nathaniel S. Colley, against

his landlord, Crawford Miller, to keep Miller from evicting Hill due to his race.

- Proposition 14 gave landowners “absolute discretion” on renting or selling their property, which Colley argued was unconstitutional and “should be heard by the Supreme Court because it was ‘of great importance to all.’”
- The Superior Judge William M. Gallagher stated the proposition “does not sanction, encourage, authorize or condone racial or religious discrimination.”
- Colley and the NAACP disagreed.

❖ “Prop. 14 Ruled Unconstitutional,” Thursday, May 12, 1966

- The California Supreme Court ruled on May 10, 1966, that Proposition 14, which overturned the Rumford Act and permitted racial discrimination in selling and renting privately owned real estate, was unconstitutional.
- The Orange County case, *Mulkey v. Reitman*, in a 5-2 opinion, successfully challenged constitutionality and overturned Article I of the State Constitution, known as Proposition 14.
- Justice Paul Peek, who wrote the majority opinion, said, “The court was bound by the United States Supreme Court’s civil rights rulings based on the equal protection and supremacy clauses in the United States Constitution.”
- The court said, “It is now beyond dispute that the 14th Amendment, though the equal protection clause, secures the right to acquire and possess property of every kind.”
- The court’s ruling also lifted the bar that kept California cities from obtaining federal funds for their redevelopment projects.

- ❖ [“Negroes on Coast Win Housing Case,” Gladwin Hill, *The New York Times*, Sun, Jun 29,](#)

[1958](#)

- While there was a racial integration setback in Arkansas, Blacks got a legal civil rights victory in North California.
- The court ruled in the *Ming* case that the sale of housing involving **FHA** or **VA**

financing cannot have any racial discrimination.

- **Nathaniel S. Colley** and **Loren Miller**, co-chairmen of the NAACP’s West Coast legal committee, argued the suit.
- Hill stated, “In practical terms, this implied that a large portion of new housing could no longer be put on [the] market on a tacit whites-only basis.”

- ❖ [State of California Assembly Bill No. 594, approved by Governor July 16, 1959](#)

- Chapter 1866 was an act to amend Sections 51 and 52 and to repeal Sections 53 and 54 of the Civic Code relating to civic rights.
- Section 51 shall be known as the “Unruh Civil Rights Act.”
- The assembly amended the section to read:

“All citizens within the jurisdiction of this State are free and equal, and no matter what their race, color, religion, ancestry, or national origin are entitled to the full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business establishments of every kind whatsoever.”

- Section 52 was amended to read:

“Whoever denies, or who aids, or incites such denial, or whoever makes any discrimination, distinction or restriction on account of color, race, religion, ancestry, or national origin, contrary to the provisions of Section 51 of this code, is liable for each and every such offense for the actual damages, and two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) in addition thereto, suffered by any person denied the rights provided in Section 15 of this code.

❖ [Office of the Attorney General, Stanley Mosk, State of California, Mon, Nov 23, 1959](#)

- The document explains questions answered by Attorney General Stanley Mosk.
- The summary of his opinions is as follows:

“1. The provisions of Civil Code section 51 (Unruh Civil Rights Act) as amended in the 1959 session of the Legislature still apply to inns, restaurants, hotels, eating-houses, places where ice cream or soft drinks of any kind are sold for consumption on the premises, barber shops, bath houses, theaters, skating rinks, public conveyances, and other places of public accommodation or amusement.

2. The provisions of Civil Code section 51 apply to the advantages, facilities, privileges, and services supplied by real estate brokers and real estate salesmen in regard to the selling, transferring, renting, leasing, or rental managing of real property.”

❖ [“Colley Files Injunction Against Initiative Sponsors,” The Sacramento Observer, Wed,](#)

[Dec 25, 1963](#)

- Nathaniel S. Colley filed an injunction in the Superior Court of California to stop the nullification of the Rumford Fair Housing Act.
- The Rumford Act ensured discrimination-free housing for approximately 70% of California’s housing.
- The California Real Estate Association, the California Apartment House

Owners Association, the Sacramento Committee for Home Protection, and some individual property owners were among the amendment's defendants.

- The paper outlines Colley's six specific attacks against Proposition 14 and gives

the lawsuit's judge, Superior Court Judge Irving H. Perius. "1. The title and summary do not state the measure's chief purpose –repeal of the Rumford Act – hence are legally insufficient. (Title and summary are prepared by the attorney general's office.)

2. It violates the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution which gives minorities equal protection under the law.

3. It violates an 1866 section of the United States Code giving Negroes the right to own real property.

4. Its application to **FHA** or Veterans Administration housing is invalid because both programs specify non-discrimination.

5. It violates a state constitutional provision limiting an initiative to a single subject.

6. It breaches another section of the state constitution by attempting constitutional revision, not merely amendment."

❖ [Letter From Jacob Olikier, Wed, Nov 11, 1964](#)

- Jakob Olikier from the Law Offices of Levin, Olikier & Ballin in Studio City, California, asks Nathaniel S. Colley and the NAACP to mention their Proposition 14 attack using the 14th Amendment.

- Olikier told the NAACP that he would instead offer an argument based on the First Amendment of the Federal Constitution: Proposition 14 “is a denial of the right to petition.”
- Olikier continues, “Proposition 14 prevents the legislature from enacting laws in the field of discrimination in housing. Under the First Amendment of the Federal Constitution, if a person is aggrieved because he has been denied a right to housing,

he has a right to petition the legislature to pass laws to protect him in this area. Since Proposition 14 prohibits the legislature from passing or enforcing such a law, it is a denial of the right of that aggrieved person to petition the legislature.”

❖ [“Colley to Represent Canson in Test Case,” *The Sacramento Observer*, Thu, Nov 12, 1964](#)

- Through Tarea Hall Pittman, West Coast Regional Secretary of the NAACP, the NAACP declared its intention to send cases to the California Supreme Court to test the constitutionality of Proposition 14.
- Nathaniel S. Colley would be testing the first case in the Canson case.

❖ [Letter from Phil Silver, Tue, Dec 15, 1964](#)

- Phil Silver was an attorney from Hollywood, California.
- His letter tells Nathaniel S. Colley that he was planning to support Colley’s action, which he filed against Crawford Miller, to obtain a declaration that Article I, Section 26 of the California Constitution, is unconstitutional.
- “I have done a considerable amount of research on this question and am prepared to support your position with an Amicus Curiae brief.”

❖ [Letter from George T. Altman, Tue, Dec 15, 1964](#)

- George T. Altman was a Beverly Hills, California, attorney and certified public accountant.
- Altman, too, was submitting a brief amicus on behalf of the National Lawyers Guild.
- He planned for his brief to cover a “broader base in the power and duty of the state under the Federal Constitution. I would, of course, submit it to you before filing” rather than the Fourteenth Amendment.

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Other Potential Housing Leads

- Park Hills Estates; Arthur R. Merkle (Sacramento Redevelopment Agency 1957)
- River Oaks
- Committee Against Segregation in Public Housing (Myra West committee chairman)
- Sacramento Council for Civic Unity
- Relocation Committee head W. A. (Jimmie) Hicks
- Howard Leonard Sacramento Redevelopment Agency relocation director
- Dr. Leonard D. Cain - Sacramento State College - Sociology
- Dr. George Herrington - Sacramento State College - Sociology

6.2.4.4 Chantal Walker

How has the archival visibility of Black Americans reflected the success of fair and equitable policy in Sacramento in particular and California at large?

By: Chantal Walker

Black residents' selective archival visibility in Del Paso Heights history most prominently appears in stories of neighborhood demise, struggle, and neglect. However, the Black struggle within the neighborhood of Del Paso Heights is not a struggle of their creation but one of systematic oppression. In the archives consulted at the Center for Sacramento History, the California State Archive, and the Bancroft Library, Black people are largely invisible within the story of Del Paso Heights. Mentions of this community are rare and scattered. It is important to note that the 1963 Rumford Fair Housing Act prohibited religious and racial discrimination in publicly assisted housing and privately financed housing of three or more units became nullified by Proposition 14 in 1964. Despite the California Supreme Court's declaration that Proposition 14 was unconstitutional in 1966, housing discrimination persisted against Black citizens in Sacramento. Del Paso Heights, a neighborhood incorporated into the City of Sacramento by 1964, was a place where Black residents could find housing because it lacked de facto restrictive covenants. However, with the increase in Black residents and the lack of gainful employment after America's defense industries slowed down due to the end of World War II, Black residents in Del Paso Heights increasingly fell into lower socioeconomic positions. The City of Sacramento selected Del Paso Heights as a redevelopment project in 1970 for blight removal. The parameter for a blighted neighborhood includes one or more of the following: old or dilapidated structures; lack of adequate sanitary facilities; a mixture of conflicting land uses; high rate of disease, crime, and juvenile delinquency; insufficient light, air, and open

spaces; high population density and overcrowding; poorly designed street and lot pattern; and depreciated land values. The Neighborhood Development Project, funded through the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency, completed several neighborhood improvements, including the construction of 65 new homes, the paving of major thoroughfares including Grand Avenue and Rio Linda Boulevard, and the opening of Del Paso Heights' first library. However, the improvements in Del Paso Heights were marginal during the time of redevelopment because both state and local policy neglected the full systematic needs of Del Paso Heights residents, including policies addressing police brutality, need for a well-funded hospital, and opportunities for gainful employment for Black Americans.

How do historical initiatives, connect with and influence present day endeavors happening in Del Paso Heights to uplift the community and improve living conditions?

By: Chantal Walker

The present Golden 1 Credit Union investment in Del Paso Heights organizations, including the Greater Sacramento Urban League, echoes earlier efforts of legislative advocate Virna Canson and her work in the Sacramento Branch of the NAACP Credit Union. Past and current initiatives are aimed at financial education, economic empowerment, and community development. Canson's work in the mid-20th Century laid foundational efforts in the provision of consumer education and subsequent financial betterment. During the mid-1960s, the NAACP Credit Union presented data on Del Paso Heights that included population demographics, housing conditions, income, education, and employment statistics. Notably, these data showed 50% of Black residents lived in unsound housing and 14.2% of Black residents in this community were unemployed. These data shed light on the socio-economic conditions in Del Paso Heights during the time Canson and the NAACP Credit Union were active. The information also highlights the challenges faced by residents and underscores the importance of initiatives like the NAACP Credit Union's community programs. Additionally, former Del Paso Heights resident Bill Bryan's 1972 grassroots initiative to rehabilitate Del Paso Heights homes mirrors the community-centered ethos of the Greater Sacramento Urban League's "Hub in the Heights" project. The "Hub in the Heights" project is a planned, mixed-use commercial, affordable housing, retail, and general economic empowerment center. Both endeavors aimed to revitalize the Del Paso Heights area, albeit in different ways. Bryan's focus on improving housing conditions for those experiencing poverty directly aligns with the current Hub project's objective to provide affordable housing and spur economic development in the region. Together, these projects reflect a sustained community effort to uplift Del Paso Heights and improve the living conditions of its residents over the years

FOOTNOTES:

1. Nathaniel S. Colley Papers, Center for Sacramento History. After the city added a non-discrimination clause to the redevelopment plan at the meeting on October 29, Colley published a statement that this must become a law for it to have any power. This did not happen, and real estate companies were able to discriminate with impunity. This was the issue Colley took to court in the Oliver Ming case.
2. NAACP Credit Unions were a key part of this history and attempts to ameliorate the damage done by the city and its redevelopment policy. In the NAACP Records, I found that Virna Canson and other NAACP officers started an Anti-Poverty Campaign which centered access to lines of credit for Black residents and other people of color (though the records show the clients were overwhelmingly African American in the 1960s). These records are extensive and leave much to be explored. If the City of Sacramento's redevelopment plan was the blueprint for capitalist development through federal tax grants at the expense of marginalized communities in urban areas, the NAACP's Credit Union and Anti-Poverty Initiative in Sacramento also became the blueprint for reversing these economic effects within the capitalist system. Its achievements were limited, but it was a national project that began in Sacramento according to the records in Carton 43 of the NAACP papers at the Bancroft.
3. I have located these case files in the superior court system, but the clerks maintained that I could not have independent access to the microfilm. They stated that these had to remain "behind the desk" and that a clerk would have to search and informally report details, which was untenable for the number of cases I intended to read. It is possible there are other avenues by which these files may be acquired, but this was the point where I had to step away.
4. City Council Meeting Minutes, Center for Sacramento History. I have this document (and many others) scanned and can share it with whoever is interested.
5. See Oliver Ming and Clifton Hill case files, Nathaniel S. Colley Papers, Series 4, Center for Sacramento History.
6. Colley Papers, Series 8, Center for Sacramento History.

The Greater Sacramento Urban League featured the these summaries in its 2023 Impact report which can be viewed [online here](#).

Chantal Walker, Researcher
September 20, 2023

Del Paso Heights Report for Empower 365 (Draft)

Introduction: The history of Del Paso Heights is a bit complex because Del Paso Heights is known as one of the oldest residential districts because it was a former Spanish and then Mexican land grant. However, to track Del Paso Heights as a neighborhood with an emphasis on investment and divestment has been challenging because Del Paso Heights remained unincorporated as a city until its annexation into Sacramento by the mid 1960s. Even with Del Paso Heights incorporation into the boundaries of Sacramento, the records on the area are sparse. Listed below is a summary of what I learned on tangible proof of investment and/or divestment in the Del Paso Heights neighborhood from approximately 1963-1992. Also included in the report is some larger historical context on Proposition 14, the Fair Housing Act of 1963 (Rumford Act), and the NAACP.

California State Library

Sacramento Union Newspaper articles 1973

Brief Background: Reporters K.W. Lee and Larry Irby (Black) interviewed more than 100 persons over a month in preparing for a two week-long series on Del Paso Heights during September 1973. The request for this investigative journalism came from concerned readers according to the publisher of the *Sacramento Union*, Carlyle Reed.

Examples of Investment from the *Sacramento Union*:

1. Example of Investment in Housing

*Name of Article: “A Legendary Do-Gooder Plants Self-Help Seeds”

-Bill Bryan, a former Aerojet engineer, along with three of his four children, took the initiative to repair rundown homes for the poor in Del Paso Heights. Since the previous summer (summer 1972), they have rehabilitated 17 homes and have plans to fix 17 more in the upcoming year. This self-help housing initiative has started to gain traction in Del Paso and surrounding North Area neighborhoods.

2. Example of Investment in Del Paso Heights Representation

*Name of article: “Del Paso Heights’ Voice in City Hall”

-Del Paso Heights has been more or less invisible to City Hall for years. But it has acquired a voice in City Council- Rev Rosenwald “Robbie” Robertson, the Heights’ representative on Sacramento City Council. Robertson stated the area doesn’t have many residents that climbed the social ladder.

3. Example of Investment in City Planning

*Name of article: “What People Can Do if they Work Together”

-“Del Paso Heights was 150 years behind the rest of Sacramento in modernization until Walter J. Slipe was hired as assistant city planner.”

4. Example of Investment in Urban Development

*Name of article: “Removal to Renewal”

-Urban renewal has spelled urban removal to black residents in target areas, and that’s why four black Political Science students took on a survey of Del Paso neighborhood development project. The four UC Davis students are Rhoda Williams, Carolyn Chapman, Ramona McGee and Woody Smallwood.

-The eighteen page report stated before Leo Goto’s entry as project manager for the Del Paso Heights’ Neighborhood Development Project (NDP) “was invaded by the callous, insensitive, disrespectful crackers from the downtown redevelopment agency.”

5. Example of Investment in Employment

* Name of article: “Black Contractors Wedge Job Door”

-Ernest Black a contractor and he received a job through the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency that required significant minority and local resident participation and called for minority contractors.

6. Example of Investment in Business

* Name of article: “State Backs Center Efforts”

-Leslie Aucoin, O.D. Sledge, Wilborn and Willie Bell formed the Del Paso Heights Development Company

-James Gordon was Project Director of the fledgling California Office of Minority Business Enterprise. Gordon supports a shopping center in Del Paso and the Del Paso Heights Development Company.

-Del Paso Heights Development Company is selling shopping center shares at \$1 each to receive the needed \$30,000 to qualify for a Small Business Administration loan.

Examples of Divestment/Challenges from the *Sacramento Union*:

1. Example of divestment in proper city lighting

*Name of Article: “Dark Streets, Dark Times”

-Del Paso Heights residents have raised concerns about the limited street lighting in the area. While there have been improvements with 400 to 500 streetlamps installed in the last eight or nine years, many areas remain dark, causing safety concerns, especially for women walking home in the dark from PTA meetings.

2. Example of divestment in Del Paso Heights public education (technically a state and city issue)

*Name of Article: “The Children in Nowhere Schools”

-Del Paso Heights schools have consistently scored lower in achievement tests compared to more affluent districts. For instance, in reading tests for grades 1, 2,

and 3, Del Paso Heights scored 1, 7, and 10 respectively, with 99 being the highest mark. In contrast, students from the San Juan district scored 12, 15, and 11 in the same tests. Additionally, the Del Paso school system has a fiscal deficit of \$65,000. The recent school finance bill passed by the Legislature is not expected to bridge the gap between Del Paso and wealthier districts for several years. The district also faces challenges in teacher salaries, with a difference of \$5,000 to \$7,000 per year compared to the Sacramento district.

*Name of article: “The Children in Nowhere Schools”

- Del Paso Heights School District- a disaster district that state lawmakers have ignored for years.

-Classroom furniture antiquated.

-Need of sidewalks, gutters, and curbs

-Poorest school district in the state

-One of the lowest assessed property valuations in the state

-The highest concentration of welfare children in the county

3. Example of a Challenge between trust of Sacramento Police and Del Paso Heights Community

*Name of article: “A Pressing Pooch Problem”

-Raymond Brewer- Norte Del Rio High School student was shot by police because they thought his stick was a sawed-off shotgun.

4. Examples of Divestment with lack of Jobs

*Name of article: “The Cry for Jobs Echoes in Heights”

-Del Paso Heights wants pay checks not welfare checks. The series will explore insiders' views on other community problems like the lack of meaningful employment leads to idleness, welfare dependency, dropouts, and vandalism.

*Name of article: "Front Culture: Casual Existence"

-Del Paso Front Culture- liquor stores and the After Six Club on Rio Linda Blvd
-Some leaders of Del Paso Heights want to erase the Front Culture and replace it with a shopping center.
-Milton Brown- Del Paso Heights business owner said the area needs classes in business and selling

*Name of article: "Fragmentation Saps the Community's Strength, diminishing its leadership"

-Big problem- lack of employment with jobs and the job deficit would help with the redevelopment of Del Paso because with jobs "they would be able to form an assessment district to pay more annual taxes and produce the necessary services like curbs and street lighting."

5. Examples of Divestment with Inadequate Housing

*Name of article: "A Sieve is Not a Home"

-Bridie J. Manning lives at 608 South Ave with the ceilings full of holes and the floor in need of repair. Manning states because of mud and stray dogs. Like Mrs. Manning many families don't have decent housing and about 800 families must live in rundown homes within the 1,000-acre area of Del Paso.

-“About one third of the Heights' 2,500 dwellings are beyond repair. Another third, in need of fixing, can be salvaged.”

-Challenge to Investment:

-Mrs. Lue Berta Harris and her 7 children slept on the kitchen floor to escape leaking rainwater of their 4-bedroom FHA 235 project house.

-By the summer of 1969 the welfare mother bought the home, but winter storms put the roof in a worse state

-Harris sought help from government and public agencies with no success and turned to Rev Cecil York, chairman of the Volunteer Parents Patrol. However, York did not go through the appropriate channels to fix Harris' roof and he lost his \$400 a month job as a county consumer aide.

-Del Paso Heights offers a study in contrast because scattered federal- city redevelopment sites look like sunny islands in the sea of slums. The city needs widened and paved streets, sidewalks, curbs, new homes where old shacks stood, remodeled homes, greenery and streetlights.

-“Thus far, the city's three old neighborhood renewal efforts have involved about 210 families- less than 10% of the area's 2,500 households.”

Project officials report:

-50 new homes have replaced substandard dwellings.

-60 houses rehabilitated.

- 18 multifamily homes soon to be built.

- Land to be cleared for 40 more multifamily dwelling and 40 elderly housing units.

-“In sum, the renewal efforts have hardly scratched the surface in recent years, redevelopment people have had to contend with diminishing federal funds and still face an uncertain future in funding levels.”

-Many homeowners view redevelopment as being too late and too little. Some say Sacramento is 20 years late in fighting blight and is paying for its indifference.

Miscellaneous:

1. *Name of article: “Fear Stalks the Streets- Vandalism, Burglary, Drugs Run Wild”

-Five years ago (1968) neighborhood people banded together and formed a Parents Patrol to curb and prevent delinquent behavior.

-“When they had urban renewal in downtown, all the dope peddlers and prostitutes came here.”

-Official police records- unavailable in terms of neighborhoods- don’t tell a full crime picture.

2. *Name or article: “Black Businessman Fights New War”

-Al Garner came home to Del Paso in 1967 after serving in Vietnam. Garner wanted to start a grocery store in Del Paso but no banks in Sacramento area would give him a loan. Garner went to the Small Business Administration (SBA) and appealed to the White House. Garner then received an SBA loan for \$85,000 which was half the amount of what he asked for. The market opened April 14, 1973, and was named Bert’s Market. Garner admitted wholesalers desired giving him inferior products. Garner, a grandson of a Louisiana slave who came to own his own peanut farm came to Del Paso like many southern blacks for a civilian job at the McClellan Air Force Base. Garner stated that Del Paso is not a ghetto but “they won’t allow enough money to upgrade the houses here except in the redevelopment area.” In the article it stated there was no improvement since 1959 except in the redevelopment area which politicians used as an issue to get elected only to forget about it after election. Garner stated he needs \$300,000 to offer more variety of goods but cannot borrow this type of money and argued for the need of a black owned bank.

3. *Name of article: “The Big Gap”

-Census personnel have carved Del Paso Heights into 3 tracks which include 65, 66, and 67. The heart of Del Paso lies in the hard-core area of tract 65 and 67 where it is the poorest and most neglected.

California State Archives:

Virna Canson Oral History: “Waging the War on Poverty and Discrimination in California through the NAACP, 1953-1974”

Summary:

Virna Canson, who was deeply involved in various community and advocacy roles in Sacramento. She has been associated with the NAACP as Treasurer-Sectary of the Sacramento branch, the Sacramento Unified School District, and other organizations. Her work has largely revolved around consumer education, credit unions, and community service. The oral history also discusses the socio-economic and political landscape of California, particularly in the context of the War on Poverty, consumerism, and the role of the NAACP. The text touches upon various issues, including racial tensions, economic oppression, consumer rights, and the challenges faced by low-income consumers. Mrs. Canson describes her cultural shock upon arriving in Sacramento, mentioning the major social event among the black community being the garbagemen's picnic.

Examples of Investment in Sacramento:

- From 1953 to 1965, Canson served as the Treasurer-Manager of the Sacramento Branch NAACP Credit Union. Under her leadership, the assets of the credit union grew from \$35,000 to \$400,000.
- Canson authored and submitted a proposal from the Sacramento Branch NAACP Credit Union, which was funded as a component of the Community Action Program of Sacramento County. This proposal, named LIFE (Low Income Family Economics), aimed to provide Money Management, Counseling, Consumer Education, and Buying Club organization among the low-income families of Sacramento County. It was the first such proposal funded under Title II-A of the Economic Opportunities Act of 1964.
- Canson was involved in the expansion of the NAACP credit union program in Sacramento, which aimed to improve consumer education.

Housing:

- Rumford Fair Housing Act: Governor Reagan campaigned to eliminate. Canson expressed her commitment to the act and mentioned the efforts to save it.
- Proposition 14 and its Legality: The document discusses Proposition 14 in the context of its legality. Attorney Nathaniel Colley believed that Proposition 14 was illegal. However, the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) in southern California either deliberately or due to lack of knowledge, veered away from this perspective. Later, they returned to use the same theory to challenge Proposition 14 and were successful in doing so. This left Colley feeling somewhat bitter.
- Proposition 14 and the Rumford Fair Housing Act: Proposition 14, in 1964, nullified the Rumford Fair Housing Act. However, Proposition 14 was eventually declared unconstitutional. The document mentions subsequent bills that aimed to achieve what Proposition 14 had tried to do.
- Proposition 14 and Desegregation: The interview touches upon the impact of Proposition 14 in the context of housing and employment. The text suggests that there might have been a perceived conspiracy to deny black people rights in various critical areas, leading to multiple

lawsuits in different regions of California.

Bancroft Archives from UC Berkeley:

NAACP Manuscripts Collections, BANC MSS NAACP, Region 1 78/18, Carton 43, Records 1942-1986:

Folder 43:1, Regional Director Canson, Central Area Conference, 1956

- Meeting Minutes in preparation for the NAACP Central Area Conference in Stockton on November second and third 1956. Topics for the conference include:

- Employment
- Housing
- Voting
- Youth Panel

- People that confirmed attendance include Bill Becker of the California Committee for Fair Employment Practices, Clarence R. Johnson from the Public Housing Administration, and Mike Elordy of the Sacramento Valley Union Labor Bulletin and various plant managers from the H.J. Heinz Company.

Folder 43:3 Regional Director Canson, Citizens for Consumer Action, 1963-1964

- Document on Sacramento Legislation Information Conference (dated April 12, 1963) to Governor Edmund G. Brown
- Topics included- improving credit laws, household moving and unfair selling practices.

Folder 43:4 Regional Director Canson, Conference to Organize a Statewide Political Association, 1964

- Letter from 2 members of Congress asking Mr. and Mrs. Canson to call on leaders in the Black community to organize a statewide political action and outline political action to fight the repeal of the Rumford Fair Housing Act.

Folder 43:6 Regional Director, Canson Correspondence, March 1967

- Letter from Leonard H. Carter Regional Director to Governor of California, Ronald Regan dated March 22, 1967. A request was made to withdraw Burton T. Smith's name from consideration by the Senate as Real Estate Commissioner of CA because he fought to get Proposition 13 passed which the Supreme Court of California ruled as unconstitutional.

Folder 43:7 Regional Director Canson, April 1967

- Letter to Executive Vice President H. Jackson Pontius dated April 30, 1967 from Virna Canson in which she disagrees with his ideology that fair housing exists in CA.

Folder 43:34 Sacramento Branch NAACP Credit Union, 1965-1965

- Letter to Charles Rossie Jr. from Virna Canson dated February 14, 1964. Canson responds to some of Rossie's questions and states the NAACP Credit Union's goal is economic betterment through proper money management, consumer information, and education.
- Canson also mentions the concern for urban renewal will eventually reflect in the economic betterment for Blacks.

- Canson noted that Black self-respect has been taken away because of a system.
- Folder 43: 34 Regional Director, Canson, Sacramento Branch NAACP Credit Union, 1964-65
- In the Narrative Description of General Duties of Employed Personnel the document mentions the Del Paso Heights Office which composed of a Citizens Committee mainly of Credit Union members living in the area. Note of commitment to the success of the Credit Union's Anti-Poverty Program.
 - Document states the existence of indecision to a specific location for the Neighborhood Conservation Center.
 - Due to urgent need of a building for the Neighborhood Conservation Center the NAACP offered at a reasonable rate a building located in Census Tract 65.

Chart 1

Tracts 65, 66, 67 (all of Del Paso Heights)

	Tract 65	Tract 66	Tract 67
Total Population	4,790	5,939	3,573

Number of Negroes	2,396	760	751
Percent of Negroes	50%	12.8%	21%
Percent of unsound Housing	40%	22.6%	31%
Family income	\$4,996.00	\$5,745.00	\$5,187.00
Yrs of School Completed	9.1	10.7	9.0
ANC Cases	472	476	248
Percent of Children on ANC	21.4	21.3	15.2
Percent of Unemployment	14.2%	9%	9.6%

- Sacramento Branch NAACP Credit Union on December 1, 1964, submitted a proposal under Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 requesting a Community Action Program in the areas of Del Paso Heights, Southside and Washington for a credit union. The intention of the credit union office will give employment, part and/or full time to a minimum of 8 people, not including the manager. The plan is to fill all these jobs with neighborhood people if it is at all possible.
- NAACP Credit Union in places including Del Paso Heights proposes the following:
 - Money management counseling
 - Training money management counselors
 - Improving the self-image: Work training Experience
 - Consumer Information
 - Career Development

- Service to other agencies
- Training for community participation and leadership
- In the application there is mention of a committee of citizens of the Del Paso Heights area organized to research the feasibility of extending credit union services by setting up a branch office in the Del Paso Heights area.

Folder 43:29 Regional Director Canson, Sacramento Branch, 1955, 1961-1963

- *Sacramento Outlook* newspaper dated July 27, 1962, in which there is a photo of a Black man and the description that Alonzo H. Holman of 2938 Fell Street, Del Paso Heights was chosen civilian of the month at McClellan Air Force Base. He was chief of the aircraft, missiles, and support branch in the budget division of the controller's directorate.
- *New York Times Western Edition*, December 23, 1963 reveals a political request informing readers that there is a request to appeal the Rumford Fair Housing Act that prohibits religious and racial discrimination in publicly assisted housing and privately financed housing of three or more units. Rumford Fair Housing Act passed in 1963.

Folder 43:30 Regional Director Canson, Sacramento Branch, January- May 1964

- A booklet entitled Negro Californians written by the Department of Industrial Relations under California's Division of Fair Employment Practices (dated June 1963) wrote the following:
 - Decades of the 1940s and 1950s had an unprecedented shift in California population growth and with that came California's establishment of fair employment commissions
 - Evident that Black persons are a major concern because Black persons "file more than 90 percent of the complaints of job discrimination received by the Commission" (Negro Californians, 8).
- The report noted that "Government agencies, Federal, State, and local, as well as educational institutions, community groups, and citizens generally, share the obligation to find and implement solutions to the problems posed by these inequities. It is for their information that this compilation is published." (Negro Californians, 8).
 - Table 19—Median Income in 1959 of Persons 14 years old and over in California Metropolitan Areas, 1960

Sacramento

White male- \$5, 437 White female- \$1,927

Black male- \$3,599 Black female- \$1,727

-Table 21 Tenure of Occupied Housing Units, California Metropolitan Areas, 1960 Sacramento

Sacramento	Total	Owner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Total (White)	Owner Occupied (White)	Renter Occupied (White)	Total (Nonwhite)	Owner Occupied (Nonwhite)	Renter Occupied (Nonwhite)
Number	150,936	100,042	50, 894	141,237	94,731	46,506	9, 699	5, 311	4, 388
Percent	100%	66.3%	33.7%	100%	67.4%	32.9%	100%	54.8%	45.2%

-Population Growth and Distribution:

- Between 1940 and 1960, while the white population of California more than doubled,

the African American population increased sevenfold, from 124,306 to 883,861.

- Most of the African American population settled in cities, with only 5.6% living in rural California by 1960.

- In the 150 largest metropolitan areas, Los Angeles-Long Beach and San Francisco-Oakland had African American populations constituting 6.9% and 8.6% of the total population, respectively.

-Employment and Earnings:

- There were disparities in employment opportunities and earnings between white and African American populations. For instance, in 1960, unemployment rates for nonwhite men were approximately double those for white men.

- African American women were predominantly employed in service industries, with 37.2% working as domestics.

- African American men were underrepresented in industries like manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, and finance, insurance, and real estate compared to their white counterparts.

Economic Disparities:

- There were significant economic disparities between white and African American populations. For example, the median income for all white males in 1959 was \$5,109, compared to \$3,553 for African American males.

- Document titled, What Doth the Lord Require of Thee by Virna Canson (Prepared for delivery at the Woman's Day of Oak Park United Church of Christ, May 31, 1964)

-Proposition 14 and Housing Discrimination:

- Canson touches upon Proposition 14, which would freeze into the constitution of the State of California the injustices of racial segregation. Sacramento holds one of the highest percentage scores in the number of people who signed the petitions supporting this proposition. This can be seen as a form of societal divestment from fair housing principles.

-Sacramento had a significant participation in signing petitions for the initiative in favor of Proposition 14. "Much to its shame and disgrace, Sacramento holds one of the highest percentage scores in the number of people who signed the petitions circulated." More than 23,000 valid signatures were placed on the petitions by the citizens of Sacramento County.

- Canson notes that the Housing Act of 1934 was meant for every family to have a decent home, and this was the start of the Federal Housing Authority (FHA).

However, once the government stepped in with its guarantees and safeguards, realtors and developers were able to pay large tracts of homes even without having a single buyer.

- "Relators and developers placed their own interpretation on "desirable neighborhood" and decided that meant "No Negroes." "The government and the people winked their eyes at these discriminatory practices." (Canson, 4).

-Sacramento's Conservative Nature:

- Canson mentions that Sacramento, being the capital city, tends to be conservative. It also touches upon the community's responsibility and the continuation of a system denying Black

persons the right to decent housing in Sacramento (Canson, 3).

Folder 43: 31 Regional Director- Canson, Sacramento Branch

Pamphlet titled, An Analysis of Proposition 14 The CREA Amendment by Howard W. Lewis, Jr. Director, CREA

Introduction of Prop 14:

- The so-called "CREA Amendment" will be proposition number 14 on the California ballot in November 1964. It is an Initiative Constitutional Amendment sponsored by the California Real Estate Association (CREA). It proposes to change Article I, the "Bill of Rights" of the Constitution of California, by adding a new section.

Misconceptions about Proposition 14:

- Many people believed that the issue was whether California should have a so-called "fair housing" law (i.e., Rumford Act). Thousands of sincere people on both sides have come to favor or oppose Proposition 14 based on whether they oppose or favor the Rumford Act. This is a misconception. Proposition 14, if passed, would not repeal the Rumford Act.

Nature of Proposition 14:

- Proposition 14, designed and sponsored by some of the top leaders of the California real estate association, would not exempt real estate brokers from the Rumford Act. The passage of Proposition 14 would provide no special benefit or exemption for real estate brokers.

Impact of Proposition 14:

- If Proposition 14 is passed, it would not only nullify statutes but would also prevent the passage of other city, county, or state laws that might require a property owner to be fair when renting or selling his property. Additionally, it would prohibit courts from limiting the discriminatory actions of property owners when renting or selling.

Summary An Analysis of Proposition 14 The CREA Amendment

- Proposition 14 seeks to amend the California Constitution to allow property owners to discriminate in the sale or rental of property based on race, color, religion, or national origin (Page 1).
- Pamphlet argues against the proposition, stating that it would lead to increased racial segregation and would destabilize property values.
- The Fair Housing Act of 1963, also known as the Rumford Act, made the services of the Fair Employment Practices Commission available for resolving housing discrimination disputes.

Proposition 14 would exempt certain property owners from this act.

- Pamphlet emphasizes the importance of equal opportunity and the dangers of allowing discrimination in housing.

Folder 43: 32 Regional Director Canson, Sacramento Branch, 1965

- Document titled, "Economic Opportunity Act Council Meeting" dated October 23, 1964
 - The first general meeting of the Economic Opportunity Act Council was called by the temporary Chairman of the Steering Committee- Mr. M.D.

Tarshes.

Purpose of meeting was to decide on the organization structure of the Council and of the Executive Committee.

- Other points brought up included that four Neighborhood Councils have been established: Oak Park, Washington Neighborhood, Southside, and Del Paso Heights. Gardenland does not yet have a Council.

-It appears that the Neighborhood Councils play a significant role in representing the interests of specific neighborhoods, especially in low-income areas, and have a say in the decision-making processes of larger committees or bodies.

Folder 43: 41 Field Director- Bailey, Housing, 1956,1957

- Preliminary Report of Private Land Use Committee on Proposed Development Projects
- Report promotes reconverting improperly used land through private enterprise methods.
- Defines blighted neighborhoods to be characterized by one or more of the following:

-old, dilapidated structures

-Lack of adequate sanitary facilities

- mixture of conflicting land uses
- high rate of disease, crime, and juvenile delinquency
- Insufficient light, air, and open spaces
- High population density and overcrowding
- Poorly designed street and lot pattern
- Depreciated land values

- Redevelopment is defined as a method whereby through cooperative action by private enterprise and public agencies, the blighted areas can be acquired, cleared and rebuilt or rehabilitated into attractive, healthful and self-supporting communities
- Redevelopment is accomplished through the Planning Commission and Redevelopment Agency that select areas for redevelopment. Then the Redevelopment Agency makes studies of physical and social conditions of redevelopment area. The redevelopment plans are prepared, public hearings are held, and then City Council approves the project. The Redevelopment Agency acquires the land and buildings through gifts, purchases, lease, or condemnation. The Redevelopment Agency assists those who need help in finding adequate housing facilities.

- With successful adoption of redevelopment, the appearance of the city improves with the elimination of slums. The spread of blight to surrounding areas is halted and the rate of disease is reduced along with crime and juvenile delinquency. Additionally, the cost of city services reduces and there is an increase in land, property values, and tax revenue to the City.

- In the same report there is mention of LPA Letter No. 16 prepared by the National Council of Negro Women. The LPA stands for “local public agency” which is the term applied by the Urban Renewal Agency by a local agency.

- LPA Letter No. 16 is one of a series of directives to local public agencies. Its subject is “Living Space Available to Racial Minority Families.” The directive’s purpose is to assure that an urban renewal project does not cause a loss in total living space available to racial minority families.

- Wherever a substantial number of families in project areas are nonwhite, LPA Letter No. 16 is imposed in addition to the usual relocation requirements.

Center for Sacramento History

Sacramento County (Calif.) Coroner's Records (CNTY 0005 22:J:9) Box 70

Folder IQUEST Files Boot- Broc, Date 1972, 6/72:7

Raymond E. Brewer, 72-1892, 6/72:7

-On December 3, 1972, at approximately 6:47 PM to 6:53 PM, Raymond Brewer, a 15-year-old Black teenager was reportedly seen with two other individuals, Larry James Ward (age 16) and Adrian Bernard Richardson (age 15), in the vicinity of recent armed robberies. The Sacramento Police Radio Dispatcher made a dispatch indicating that three male African Americans were acting suspiciously near the Green Olive Bar, located at 1431 Del Paso Boulevard. Responding police units observed three male African American subjects walking past the Green Olive Bar, who appeared to fit the descriptions of suspects wanted in recent armed robberies.

- In the sequence of events that followed, Raymond Brewer and his two companions began to run, with police officers in pursuit. During this chase, Raymond Brewer was shot by a police officer. His two companions were subsequently taken into custody.

-On December 3, 1972, at around 7:10 PM, the Sacramento Police Department notified the coroner's office about a shooting incident at the corner of Edgewater Road and El Monte Avenue.

-Upon arrival at the scene, the investigators were informed by Lieutenant Johnson of the Sacramento Police Department that no information would be given to them at that time. They were told to obtain details from the homicide division later.

- Further details about the shooting incident indicate that Brewer had multiple wounds. Specifically, he had three additional wounds on his right leg. One wound was approximately 11 inches above the right ankle on the lateral side of the leg. The next two wounds were located approximately 16 inches and 17 inches above the right ankle, situated between the lateral and posterior portions of the leg. For a more detailed description and location of all wounds, reference was made to the provided sketches.

- At 10:10 PM on December 3, 1972, Detective Hunter of the Sacramento Police Department was approached for more information about the incident. He indicated that the investigation was still ongoing and shared that the shooting occurred when Brewer had reportedly been running from the back of a building. No further details were provided at that time, and it was mentioned that more information would be released by the Sacramento Police Department at a later stage.

Mike Weber Papers Box 9 (MS 0092 MP C:4: F:6)

Historical Context:

Del Paso Heights history traces back to the Rancho Del Paso Thoroughbred Farm, which was once a high-yield wheat and alfalfa farm. The area was originally inhabited by various Native American Tribes before being deeded to Eliah Grimes in 1844. Over the years, Del Paso Heights underwent significant demographic shifts, particularly with the migration of Black people during and after World War II. Many of these migrants were attracted by wartime industries. By the 1960s, Del Paso Heights was in decline, with poor housing conditions, high unemployment rates, and other socio-economic challenges. Efforts were made in the 1970s to address these issues, with the implementation of the Neighborhood Development Project (NDP) which aimed to improve living conditions and infrastructure in the area.

Examples of Investment and Divestment in Del Paso:

Investment:

- In the 1970s, the city implemented the Neighborhood Development Project (NDP), a three- million-dollar effort funded through the Sacramento Redevelopment Agency (SRA) to address the community's challenges.
- 65 new homes were constructed, and 50 homes were rehabilitated.
- Infrastructure improvements included the installation of curbs, gutters, and over three miles of new sidewalk.
- Major thoroughfares, such as Grand Avenue and Rio Linda Boulevard, were paved.
- Land was cleared in preparation for 40 elderly housing units, 50 multi-family units, a health clinic, and the Del Paso Heights School.
- The community saw the opening of its first public library.

Divestment:

- By the 1960s, Del Paso Heights was in decline, marked by poor housing conditions. The 1960 census indicated that over 27% of all housing units were in a dilapidated or deteriorated condition.
- The area had the highest concentration of low-income residents, unemployment, female- headed households, and public assistance recipients in Sacramento County.
- Drug abuse, vandalism, theft, and health challenges were prevalent in the community.
- Over 27% of the housing in the area in 1965 was owned by absentee landlords, indicating a lack of local investment and care for the properties.

Historic Environment Consultants Box 10 (MS0065 17: K:5)

Summary: There was a Historic Inventory Survey done of historic buildings in Del Paso Heights conducted in 1985. The survey included the following buildings:

- Woodside Hospital (Historic name: Senator Diggs' Home) located at 3201 Del Paso Blvd
- Strader Residence, located at 1501 Strader
- Renaissance Square (Historic name Savercool and McDermott/Cameron Pontiac/ Dick Wareing Ford), located at 1217 Del Pas Blvd.
- Iceland, located at 1430 Del Paso Blvd.
- Del Paso Theatre, located at 2122 Del Paso Blvd.

- International Café, The Baked Apple (Historic name: Berg Building), located at 2014 Del Paso Blvd.
- Original Auto Parts (Historic name Original Auto Wrecking), located at 1309 Del Paso Blvd.
- Swanson's Cleaners, located at 1439 Del Paso Blvd.
- Dritz Cyclery (Historic name: Crystal Lunch), located at 2209 Del Paso Blvd.

* Of particular importance in this Historic Inventory Survey was the Woodside Hospital because it was originally the part of the land of the estate of Ben Ali Haggin, a member of the family that acquired the land from the original Spanish and then Mexican land grant, Rancho del Paso. The original mansion built was for Senator Diggs, a California politician. It is interesting to note that the mansion turned hospital had "Interior elements include some elaborate plaster moldings, wide entry to a spacious office on the north, arched double doors, and fine wood moldings." The writer for the Historic Inventory Survey argues that "the structure was once outstanding architecturally and possess considerable importance historically."

In an article from *The Sacramento Outlook* (1971) staff writer, K.W. Lee wrote in "Thoroughbreds Give Way to Wild Mongrels" that the history of Del Paso Heights is steeped in irony. According to Lee, the area once bred millionaire ranchers and world-famous stallions. At the time of the article's publication, the area "swarms with underdogs and stray dogs in the bleak setting of deprivation and neglect." Lee presents a striking juxtaposition with his statement that "A century and generation ago, the area was the home of the first white family in the Sacramento Valley. Now it's the home primarily of black Sacramentans." Lee credits the need for war industry jobs as the reason for the Black migration from the South to the West. It was McClellan Air Force Base that needed civilian workers, and the unincorporated Del Paso Heights provided housing for Black persons. Lee points to the urban renewal (or urban removal to some) of downtown Sacramento (Capitol Mall project announced in February 1954. It was between 1957-1961 that approximately 2,000 people relocated due to the Capitol Mall project) that drove the poor into Del Paso Heights where there was still cheap housing.

- According to a 1992 Cultural Resources report for the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency conducted by STA Planning Inc.

Summary: A brief history is given of what became known as Del Paso Heights. By 1910 land was sold to the Sacramento Valley Colonization Company, and this marked the time when the area become known as North Sacramento. The land from the original Mexican land grant was subdivided and sold to various developers and other land companies. Another land company was the North Sacramento Land Company. By 1924, North Sacramento became incorporated which allowed for public improvements. By 1939, part of North Sacramento became annexed in 1939 to Sacramento. Subsequent annexations occurred in 1947, 1950, 1955, and 1962 and the complete merger of the two cities occurred in June 1964. According to the report it listed the following for why the area remained one of "limited growth and modest residential development:"

- physical isolation from Sacramento
- modest size of initial development parcels
- moderate income residency initially sought for the area by the early land companies

Box 11 Historic Environment Consultants (MS 0065 17:K:5)

Folder SHRA Target Areas- Stockton, Del Paso, Franklin, Oak Park, 11:1

- 1990 Report, Overview Survey of Historical, Architectural, and Cultural Resources within Three Target Areas for Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency prepared by Historic Environment Consultants
- Part of the report looked to see if any structures in the Del Paso region could be listed on the National Register of Historic Places
- Only properties that appear to meet criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places include Iceland Arena, Del Paso Theater and a recommendation given for the Liberty Iron Works would need further evaluation to determine how much of the WWI building remains and its history needs research.

*Personal Note- I could not find any buildings in Del Paso Heights listed in the National Register of Historic Places for California.

- Email correspondence dated in 2005 asking about the Del Paso Nuevo Master Plan.

C.J. Evans Collection Box 1 (MS 0081 18: G:8)

Folder Del Paso Heights, 1998, Report to Council on the Proposed Fifth Amendment, 1:25
Report to Council on the Proposed Fifth Amendment to the Redevelopment Plan for the Del Paso Heights Redevelopment Project (prepared by Katz Hollis for the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Sacramento, dated July 1998)

Summary:

The document revolves around the redevelopment strategies and projects in the Del Paso Heights Redevelopment Project Area. The primary objective of these redevelopment efforts is to eliminate blighting conditions in the area and stimulate economic growth.

-Investment in Del Paso:

-The Redevelopment Agency of the City of Sacramento (referred to as the Agency) has spent over \$5 million on housing projects, which has leveraged over \$13 million in private investment. Additionally, \$1.2 million in Agency expenditures have resulted in over \$2 million in private investment. In total, public, and private sector investment in the Project Area amounts to approximately \$36 million.

-The Revitalization Strategy was updated to focus on economic development projects, including shopping center development, commercial loans and grants, and assistance for office/light industrial development along the Interstate 80 freeway corridor.

-Since the Project's adoption in 1970, over \$20 million of tax increment revenues and Community Development Block Grant funds have been expended on projects and programs to eliminate blighting conditions in the Project Area.

-The Implementation Strategy outlined various programmatic categories for redevelopment, including environmental improvement programs, housing assistance programs, an economic development program, and a capital improvement program.

-The Del Paso Nuevo area, bounded by South Avenue, Norwood Avenue, Fairbanks Avenue, and Ahos Avenue, is slated for complete infrastructure replacement and replanning, funded by both grants and a loan from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

- Between 1975-1985 focus on redevelopment was on improving the appearance and livability of residential neighborhoods and commercial areas by rehabilitating existing housing, developing new housing and businesses, and the installation of new upgraded public facilities and improvements (Report to City Council, 10).

-In 1991, the Revitalization Strategy was updated to focus on economic development projects,

including shopping center development, commercial loans and grants, and assistance for office/light industrial development along the Interstate 80 freeway corridor.

-Divestment/Challenges in Del Paso:

- Part of the report mentions that due to Del Paso Heights remaining semi-rural and being an unincorporated community, the area “had little infrastructure development.” It was during the 1950s and 1960s when the wartime economy slowed down and workers left the McClellan Air Force Base was when “Del Paso Heights began to show signs of economic decline” (Report to City Council, 4).
- The report mentions that to address “the urban problems that were emerging in the area, the City of Sacramento annexed Del Paso Heights in 1965. In 1970, the Del Paso Heights Redevelopment Project Area was adopted. Since original adoption, the Plan has been amended four times” (Report to City Council, 4)
- The lack of infrastructure in the area led to localized flooding during the rainy season and year-round unsanitary conditions. The housing prices of the area deteriorated, and lower income households came to the area by the late 1960s.
- The financial burden on businesses and property owners in the Project Area is exemplified by depreciated and stagnant property sales prices, abnormally low lease rates, and depressed retail sales tax revenues.

Box 3 of 6, 25: K: I, City of North Sac, City Clerk, Consolidation- Annexation Records, 80/36

-139 petitions from Del Paso Heights residents protesting the annexation to North Sacramento City (some protests are clearly dated August 1958 some protests are undated)

- Petition written to the Honorable City Council stated:

“Gentlemen:

We the undersigned owners of the property described below located within the boundaries of the area proposed for annexation to North Sacramento do herewith protest the annexation of our property to the city of North Sacramento, Calif.”

San Francisco University Dissertation:

Banks, Loubbertha A. "A history of demographic, economic, and organizational changes in the Del Paso Heights School District, 1965-1975." PhD diss., San Francisco University, 1983.

Summary: From my research in the Max Weber papers at the Center for Sacramento History I came across mention of a dissertation- “A History of Demographic economic and organizational changes in the Del Paso Heights School District, 1965-1975” published in 1983 by Loubbertha Banks. In the dissertation Dr. Banks argues that Del Paso Heights School District (DPHSD) depended mostly on state support to finance its education because local support via property taxes between 1965 – 1975 was nominal (Banks, 76). Dr. Banks mentions the huge decline in white enrollment in DPHSD might be because of Black leadership positions within the Board of Trustees where three out of five citizens elected where Black in 1961. In 1968 Dr. William F. Fowler became the first Black superintendent and the first Black principal was

Hortense Hurdle. By 1972 the second Black superintendent was Dr. Charles W. Townsel. Dr. Banks notes that the rationale for whites moving out of the Del Paso Heights neighborhood was because of better housing in other areas, raises in income, decreased unemployment, and a desire to improve lifestyles and better educational opportunities (Banks, 26).

As Dr. Banks states “changes in economic conditions and housing characteristics in the District during the ten-year period from 1965 to 1975 were not noteworthy” (Banks, 84). Dr. Banks states that as DPHSD became predominantly Black the district came to depend on federal and state funded programs (Banks, 86). The date for when Dr. Banks claimed DPHSD received federal and state monies started in 1972. In Dr. Banks’ conclusion she cited that the DPHSD suffered from substandard housing, a lack of recreational facilities, non-existent healthcare facilities, poor public transportation, and high unemployment (Banks, 97). Dr. Banks emphasizes that housing patterns 1965 to 1975 continued to show changes from owner occupied to renter occupied.

- The dissertation focuses mainly on the history of Del Paso Heights Unified School District (DPHSD) between the years of 1965 through 1985.
- However, some socio-economic conditions within the educational system and neighborhood prove useful including:
 - “Whites moved out because of “white flight,” better housing in other areas, raises in income, decreased unemployment, and a desire to improve lifestyles, and better educational opportunities” (Banks, 26)
 - A 1970 survey conducted by the Del Paso Robla Neighborhood Service showed the median value of a housing unit in Del Paso Heights to be \$12, 467. According to the survey, of the 14,095 housing units, 157 lacked kitchens and 142 units lacked plumbing (Banks, 27).
 - The low wealth of the communities is directly reflected in the low teacher salaries, insufficient materials, and supplies (Banks, 30).
 - Cycle of poverty centered around low property tax base, unemployment, and unskilled workers (Banks, 33)
 - Del Paso Heights School District reached a peak in enrollment in 1967 by 600 more students and then student enrollment decreased by 1974 (Banks, 36). The reasons for the drop in enrollment include:
 - migration from the area by parents who had improved their economic status
 - urban renewal
 - freeway construction
 - loss of faith in the District’s ability to education
 - Ethnic composition of students- mainly Black students
 - Dr. Banks argues DPHSD depends primarily on state and federal funding to finance its education because local support via property taxes between 1965 to 1975 was nominal (Banks, 76)
 - The massive federal and state funded programs began in 1972
 - Dr. Banks argues in her conclusion that the DPHSD suffers from substandard housing, a lack of recreational facilities, non-existent healthcare facilities, poor public transportation, and high unemployment (Banks, 97).

California State University, Sacramento:

Cesar, Clarence. "An Historical Overview of Sacramento Black Community 1850-1980." PhD

diss., California State University, Sacramento, 1985.

- According to the late Reverend Hercules Benbow in a 1973 interview for *The Sacramento Observer* he mentioned during the late 1920s and early 1930s, there were no more than seven black families residing in Del Paso Heights (Cesar, 122).
- By the 1960s, demographic trends indicated an increase in the black population in areas like Oak Park, Del Paso Heights, and the Elder Creek area. Census tract 65 in Del Paso Heights had the largest black population in 1960 with 2,396 persons (Cesar, 160).
- The movement of black residents from the West End of downtown Sacramento resulted in increasing black populations in Oak Park, Del Paso Heights, and the Glen Elder-Elder Creek areas (Cesar, 164).

Future Research

At the Center for Sacramento History in Illa Collin Papers Box 5 in Folder Illa Collin Papers Project and Subject Files, Ethnic Groups: African Americans, NAACP 1984-2001, 5:21

- Newspaper clipping from *The Observer* lists a timeline of NAACP moments including:
- 1950- Black persons not allowed to buy homes in the growing North area of the county. NAACP picketed the open houses of tracts.
- 1950- The Sacramento Branch successfully campaigned to have the new Helvetia Housing Projects integrated
- 1959- the Sacramento Branch's legal redress committee actively fought police brutality in the City; a number of suits were filed.
- Del Paso Heights community changes were chronicled by a *Sacramento Bee* staff writer on June 3, 1975.

-At the Center for Sacramento History I found the reference to the *North Sacramento Journal*. There might be some useful information on Del Paso Heights. The copies exist at California State Library and Sacramento Public Library.

-At the Center for Sacramento History in **Box 1 of 7, City of North Sac City Clerk Minutes 1954, 1957, and 1962**

- An attempt was made at looking through the tedious task of city minutes and with more time this might be a fruitful venture. I noticed some consistent references to drainage problems between Del Paso Boulevard and Rio Linda Boulevard, indicating potential infrastructure issues.
- At the Center for Sacramento History I requested the City of Sacramento's Annual Report from their Planning Department. The report is from 1964-1965. However, one of the archivists working there informed me that they could not find the folder and assumed it was misfiled. I think this folder will prove useful and another request for it is worthwhile.

There might be some useful archives at Sacramento State. I did not have time to visit, but the Guide to the Sacramento Charter Commission's Records (1964-1973) may prove useful. If there is a way of finding the 18 page report on Del Paso Heights prepared by UC Davis students, that could be fruitful.

Additionally, the NAACP archives in Oakland and at the Bancroft also should prove worthwhile, but parking at Berkely is expensive and so is travel (depending on point of

departure).

Selected Bibliography

City Planning Reports:

Progress in Urban Renewal, Redevelopment Agency City of Sacramento, Prepared by Sacramento City Planning Commission (1966).

The people of Sacramento: plan for 1960 through redevelopment.
Sacramento (Calif.). City Planning Commission (1950).

- 1945 Community Redevelopment Act of the State of California and the National Housing Act of 1949 define the criteria indicative of blighted areas (Sacramento Urban Redevelopment, 10)
- In the section, Nonwhite Households there is mention that the greatest concentration of non-whites to be in the 'West End' of the city with some blocks having 90 to 99 percent of occupied dwelling units occupied by non-whites in 1940 (Sacramento Urban Redevelopment, 26)

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City of Sacramento and the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency on McClellan/ Heights/ Parker Homes Land Use/ Infrastructure Plan (May 22, 2007)

Link: <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/CDD/Planning/Long-Range/Specific-Plans/McClellan-Heights-Parker-Homes-Final-Plan.pdf?la=en>

- The report stated that because there was no established building or zoning ordinances before Del Paso Heights was annexed in 1965 the area followed a haphazard pattern. The exception to this was the development known as Parker Homes built in 1943.

Dissertations/Theses:

Banks, Loubbertha A. "A history of demographic, economic, and organizational changes in the Del Paso Heights School District, 1965-1975." PhD diss., San Francisco University, 1983.

Cesar, Clarence. "An Historical Overview of Sacramento Black Community 1850-1980." PhD diss., California State University, Sacramento, 1985.

Fisher, Damany M. "Far From Utopia: Race, Housing, and the Fight to End Residential Segregation in Sacramento, 1900-1980." PhD dissertation. University of California, Berkeley, 2008.