

David Whitaker, Esq.
Director
Irvin Corley, Jr.
Executive Policy Manager
Marcell R. Todd, Jr.
Senior City Planner
Janese Chapman
Deputy Director

John Alexander
LaKisha Barclift, Esq.
M. Rory Bolger, Ph.D., AICP
Elizabeth Cabot, Esq.
Tasha Cowen
Richard Drumb
George Etheridge
Deborah Goldstein

City of Detroit CITY COUNCIL

LEGISLATIVE POLICY DIVISION
208 Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
Detroit, Michigan 48226
Phone: (313) 224-4946 Fax: (313) 224-4336

Christopher Gulock, AICP
Derrick Headd
Marcel Hurt, Esq.
Kimani Jeffrey
Anne Marie Langan
Jamie Murphy
Carolyn Nelson
Kim Newby
Analine Powers, Ph.D.
Jennifer Reinhardt
Sabrina Shockley
Thomas Stephens, Esq.
David Teeter
Theresa Thomas
Kathryn Lynch Underwood
Ashley A. Wilson

TO: The Honorable Detroit City Council

FROM: David Whitaker, Director 
Legislative Policy Division (LPD) Staff

DATE: August 18, 2020

RE: Community Reparations

Council President Pro Tem Sheffield has directed Legislative Policy Division (LPD) to provide a report and a proposed resolution tailored to Detroit, considering the feasibility and ability of the City to establish, process, develop and implement community reparations for mass-historic unjust treatment of Detroit's majority African American population.

As recently as July 2020, in the wake of the national socioeconomic emergency involving the coronavirus pandemic and the outpouring of Black Lives Matter political demonstrations across the country, Detroit City Council adopted a resolution in favor of resuming affirmative action policies to benefit Michigan's African-American communities, quoting with approval from "**What is Owed**", the passionate June 30, 2020, New York Times [Op Ed](#) by Nikole Hannah-Jones: "**If true justice and equality are ever to be achieved in the United States, the country must finally take seriously what it owes black Americans.**"

In that previous resolution, Council recognized that "reparations for slavery and post-emancipation systemic discrimination and racism have been prominent" among protestors' demands during recent historic demonstrations. This referral from Council President Pro Tem Sheffield seeks extensive further information and analysis of reparations, including how the demand for reparations should be applied in the context of the City of Detroit today. LPD can offer at most a few tentative suggestions to help frame meaningful future efforts to secure reparations in the deep and fundamental sense envisioned by these calls.

A major challenge posed by this referral, in LPD's judgment, is less appreciating the overwhelming moral and public policy case for reparations, than determining the optimal scope of the initial staff response and achievable follow up metrics under such major historic, and rapidly changing circumstances.¹ The reparations issue, to LPD's understanding, presupposes a US federal government program funding commitment, not present today and clearly beyond the scope of the City of Detroit alone. What can LPD, City Council, and other Detroiters do now and in foreseeable future organizing contexts to sustain this historic demand for justice? How can we expect a newly energized national demand to roll out? And as specified in this referral, how should it be tailored to the particular circumstances of Detroit?

History of Reparations Activism in Detroit

Without even attempting to summarize the comprehensive history of reparations as a public political issue in the City of Detroit, simply mentioning the ancestral names of a founder of the national reparations movement, Detroit realtor "Reparations Ray" Jenkins, and Congressman John Conyers, Jr., will hopefully serve to memorialize the efforts of thousands of Detroiters over the last half century that should be considered in connection with this referral. Whatever institutionalized forms the reparations movement takes going forward, leading Detroit activists will continue to play these roles.

Recent Statements Supporting Reparations

Since at least the publication of Ta-Nehisi Coates' June 2014 [essay](#) in The Atlantic magazine, the issue of reparations for African American exploitation and structural predation by white supremacist America has been the subject of extensive public debates. Coates surveys the historic structural policies of discrimination and exploitation against African Americans - not limited to enslavement, but extended effectively by regional Jim Crow segregation and disfranchisement under the terror system of lynch "law" in the south, as well as national policies like redlining through mortgage discrimination, *de facto* segregation, structural racial disparities in health, wealth and income, and today's racial injustices continuing right up to the present moment after the murder of George Floyd, the Flint River scandal and water shut offs in Detroit. He argues cogently that this history and present condition demand concrete, material reparations. In public dialog, his extensive argument is usually less refuted than redirected into a debate about practical implementation and of course, cost.

As Coates states, "Having been enslaved for 250 years, black people were not left to their own devices. They were terrorized. In the Deep South, a second slavery ruled. In the North, legislatures, mayors, civic associations, banks, and citizens all colluded to pin black people into ghettos, where they were overcrowded, overcharged, and

¹ Because the articles by Coates and Hannah-Jones quoted herein are worthy of reading in full, the digital version of this report includes links to those on line sources, and LPD notes that comprehensively summarizing these long arguments requires compression and focus on the main themes; there is much more detail available than can efficiently be restated in the context of this report. For example, the attached preliminary statement of the National African American Reparations Commission deserves careful study.

undereducated. Businesses discriminated against them, awarding them the worst jobs and the worst wages. Police brutalized them in the streets. And the notion that black lives, black bodies, and black wealth were rightful targets remained deeply rooted in the broader society.”

Nikole Hannah-Jones picked up Coates’ achievement of compression, analysis and advocacy with the benefit of several years of Black Lives Matter popular movement activities, in the midst of the current coronavirus pandemic/recession (with its brutal racial disparate impact on African American health), and the simultaneous post-George Floyd uprising. Her passion begins to reframe this weighty moment:

“What we’re seeing is most likely a result of unrelenting organizing by the Black Lives Matter movement. It’s the pandemic, which virtually overnight left staggering numbers of Americans without enough money to buy food, pay rent and sustain their businesses. For many white Americans who may have once, consciously or unconsciously, looked down upon this nation’s heavily black and brown low-wage service workers, Covid-19 made them realize that it was the delivery driver and grocery clerk and meatpacker who made it possible for them to remain safely sequestered in their homes — and these workers were dying for it. Black Americans, in particular, have borne a disproportionate number of deaths from both Covid-19 and law enforcement, and many nonblack protesters have reasoned that black people should not have to risk their lives alone in taking to the streets demanding that the state not execute its citizens without consequence.”

Her summation merits continual rereading to appreciate the stakes of this debate, in this community and at this time:

“No one can predict whether this uprising will lead to lasting change. History does not bode well. But there does seem to be a widespread acceptance of the most obvious action we could take toward equality in a nation built on the espoused ideals of inalienable, universal rights: pass reforms and laws that ensure that black people cannot be killed by armed agents of the state without consequence.

But on its own, this cannot bring justice to America. If we are truly at the precipice of a transformative moment, the most tragic of outcomes would be that the demand be too timid and the resolution too small. If we are indeed serious about creating a more just society, we must go much further than that. We must get to the root of it.”

Hannah-Jones correctly zeroes in on the real issue of wealth: “The prosperity of this country is inextricably linked with the forced labor of the ancestors of 40 million black Americans for whom these marches are now occurring, just as it is linked to the stolen land of the country’s indigenous people. Though our high school history books seldom make this plain: Slavery and the 100-year period of racial apartheid and racial terrorism known as Jim Crow were, above all else, systems of economic exploitation.” The call for reparations to redress this situation is well-supported by the historic facts and the fundamentals of any viable notion of justice. Her conclusion also resonates:

“If black lives are to truly matter in America, this nation must move beyond slogans and symbolism. Citizens don’t inherit just the glory of their nation, but its wrongs too. A truly

great country does not ignore or excuse its sins. It confronts them and then works to make them right. If we are to be redeemed, if we are to live up to the magnificent ideals upon which we were founded, we must do what is just. It is time for this country to pay its debt. It is time for reparations.”

Asheville, North Carolina Community Reparations

This referral lifts up the attached Asheville City Council’s Resolution Supporting Community Reparations for Black Asheville, and requests a comparable resolution for Detroit. That draft resolution is attached. One point framing this engagement is the different forms of local government: Asheville’s City Council directs their city manager to undertake this work. As Council Members know, Detroit City Council lacks that power in Detroit’s strong Mayor form of government. Charter Sec. 4-113

If Council has any other questions or concerns regarding this subject, LPD will be happy to provide further research and analysis upon request.

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING COMMUNITY REPARATIONS
FOR BLACK DETROIT**

By Council President Pro Tem Mary Sheffield

WHEREAS, The purpose of this resolution is to help further exploration of the feasibility and ability of the City of Detroit to establish processes, develop, and implement community reparations for mass-historic unjust treatment of Detroit's majority African American population; and

WHEREAS, The Detroit City Council strongly supports reparations for centuries of human enslavement and post-emancipation systemic discrimination and racism - as declared by City Council's previous resolution supporting affirmative action policies in July 2020, reparations have been prominent among protestors' demands during recent historic demonstrations in the wake of the George Floyd killing, which seem to have at least temporarily shifted racial attitudes and relations among many Americans; and

WHEREAS, The Detroit City Council specifically recognizes and supports the City Council of Asheville, North Carolina's July 14, 2020 Resolution Supporting Community Reparations for Black Asheville (attached), and City Council hopes a mass movement in such local city councils can materially support the demand for reparations; and

WHEREAS, The Detroit City Council demands a strong and sufficient US federal government program funding commitment to reparations, funding programs that should be democratically administered at the local level for the benefit of Detroit's African American community applying a racial equity framework, including without restriction or limitation such popular social initiatives as shall be necessary and appropriate to support this core Detroit population's needs and capacities for protection, enforcement and fulfillment of all their human rights, including:

- a. Right to Water and Sanitation
- b. Right to Environmental Health
- c. Right to Safety
- d. Right to Live Free from Discrimination, including people with disability and immigrants
- e. Right to Recreation
- f. Right to Access and Mobility
- g. Right to Housing
- h. Right to the Fulfillment of Basic Needs; and

WHEREAS, Pursuant to City Council's Charter-mandated powers of investigation, legislation, oversight and comprehensive responsibility for City affairs, City Charter Sec 4-109, the above public policy priorities for a human-rights based economic reparations system should be pursued vigorously and locally in Detroit by establishment of task force-oriented appropriate public service commissions regarding environmental justice, sustainability, a dedicated and

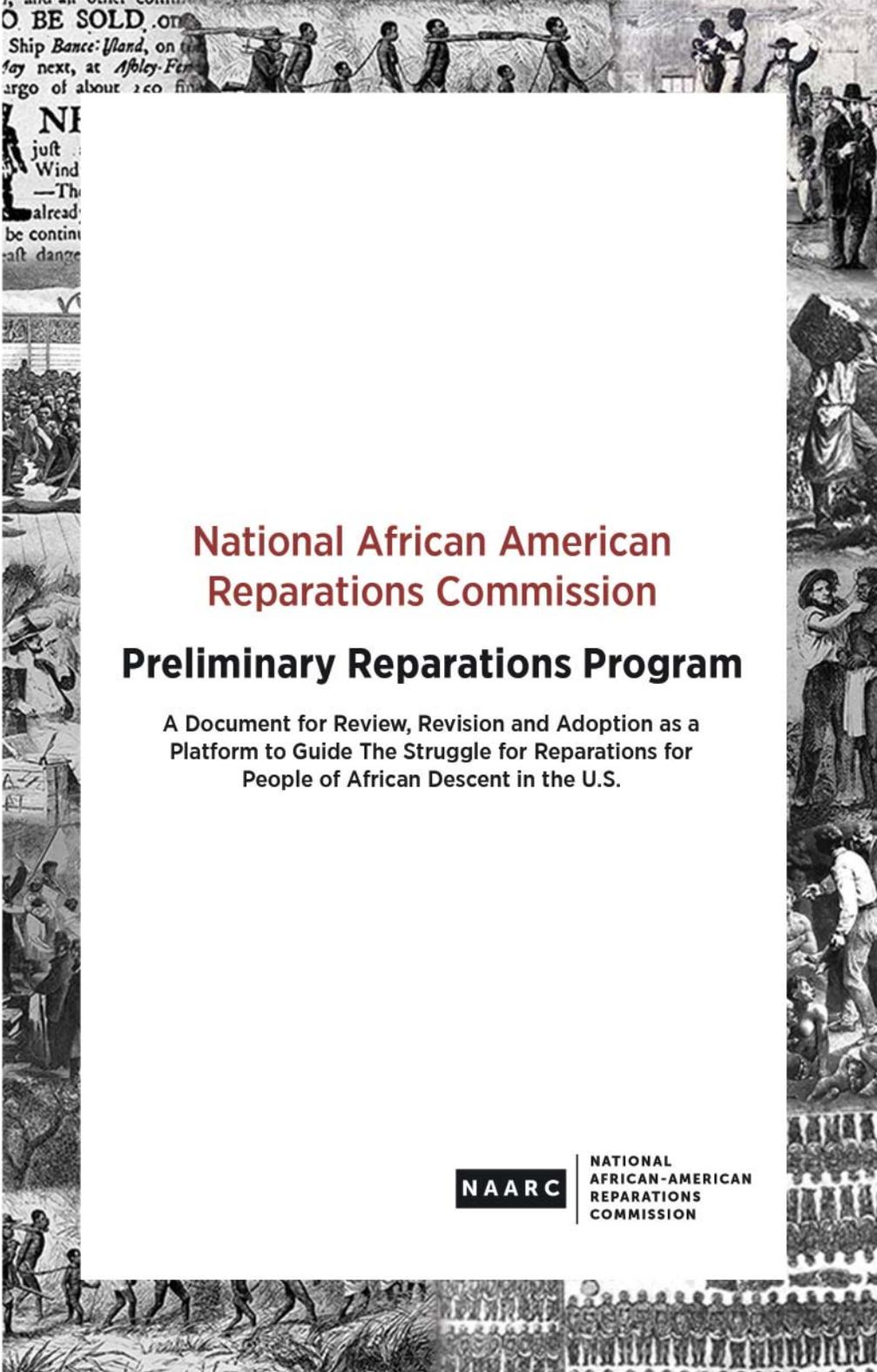
adequate public health fund, and the whole range of the City of Detroit's local reparations initiatives; and

WHEREAS, These formal demands are cumulative and intended for the benefit of the community of African American descendants of formerly enslaved and exploited claimants – descendants of those previously enslaved Americans who were first solemnly promised, then unjustly denied 40 acres and a mule to establish economic independence after centuries of bondage, and in the course of more generations of racial terror; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Detroit City Council strongly supports reparations and a governmentally sponsored, citizen-led grassroots movement for reparations due Detroit's African American community, as briefly outlined in this resolution; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Detroit City Council calls on all Detroiters, Michiganders, Americans and people of good faith to support the historically justified demand for reparations for African Americans' exploitation from enslavement to the present; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be forwarded to Mayor Mike Duggan, Governor Gretchen Whitmer, and all interested public media, civil society, educational and civil groups and individuals attending to the historic responsibility of reparations.



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National African American Reparations Commission

Preliminary Reparations Program

A Document for Review, Revision and Adoption as a
Platform to Guide The Struggle for Reparations for
People of African Descent in the U.S.

NAARC | NATIONAL
AFRICAN-AMERICAN
REPARATIONS
COMMISSION

Background and Purpose

This document is the product of the initial deliberations of the seventeen member National **African American Reparations Commission**. [See list at the conclusion of this document].

Convened by the Institute of the Black World 21st Century (IBW), the National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC) derives its inspiration from and is modeled after the CARICOM Reparations Commission which, is mobilizing/organizing to demand compensation from the former European colonialists for Native genocide and African enslavement. This demand is being made with the unanimous support/blessing of the nations of the Caribbean. The bold move by the CARICOM nations to form such a Commission has captured the imagination of people of African descent throughout the Pan African world and is providing a major spark to the global Reparations Movement.

Inspired by the courageous example of the CARICOM Commission, the primary goal of NAARC is to serve as a vehicle, among others, to intensify, broaden and deepen the Reparations Movement in the U.S. From its inception the formulation of a **Preliminary Reparations Program** has been a major task of the Commission. While the formulation of such a Program is important, the Commission believes an educational process that engages people of African descent in a national dialogue about proposals for reparations is as important as a particular set of proposals or action agenda. Educating, engaging and activating people of African descent to support Reparations as a concept is the major task of NAARC.

The centerpiece of the Commission's education and advocacy efforts will be the convening of Regional Hearings and community events to present the **Preliminary Reparations Program** and receive input, suggestions and recommendations for consideration for the **Final Reparations Program**. The adoption of the **Final Reparations Program** will occur after the Regional Hearings and other community based sessions.

To reiterate, the education and advocacy process is as important as the proposals presented and eventually adopted. Winning reparations is not possible without galvanizing a critical mass of people of African descent and allies who come to believe in the validity and value of the concept and are willing to struggle to bring it to fruition. In this spirit that the **Preliminary Reparations Program** was formally released at the **Reparations Braintrust** convened by Congressman John Conyers, Jr., September 18, 2015, at the 45th Annual Legislative Conference of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc.

To download additional copies of the **Preliminary Reparations Program** or receive regular Bulletins about the U.S. and global Reparations Movements, sign-up to become a **Reparations Advocate** on the website www.ibw21.org or simply visit the **Reparations Resource Center** on the same website. For further information contact info@ibw21.org or call **888. 774.2921**

National African American Reparations Commission Preliminary Reparations Program

Preamble

No amount of material resources or monetary compensation can ever be sufficient restitution for the spiritual, mental, cultural and physical damages inflicted on Africans by centuries of the MAAFA, the holocaust of enslavement and the institution of chattel slavery. These crimes against Black humanity, as affirmed by the **Durban Declaration and Program of Action**, were responsible for the death of millions of Africans who were ripped from their families and nations to labor for the enrichment of industries, commercial and financial institutions and individuals in Europe and the United States. In large measure the wealth of the new American nation was accumulated from the centuries of free labor, brutally extracted from enslaved Africans. With the “abolition” of slavery the “emancipated” sons and daughters of Africa suffered systematic, often violent repression, oppression, exploitation and deprivation under southern apartheid and de facto segregation in every region of this nation.

A political and economic system infected with white supremacy and structural/institutional racism persisted in retarding the dreams and aspirations of a people courageously striving to sustain families, build institutions and create healthy communities in a hostile land. The devastating damages of enslavement and systems of apartheid and de facto segregation spanned generations to negatively affect the collective well being of Africans in America to this very moment. Indeed, despite the civil rights/human rights “gains” achieved by the Black Freedom Struggle, the crises that continue to plague millions of Black people are incontrovertible proof that the disease of white supremacy still permeates the socio-economic and political culture, structures, institutions and systems of this society.

The fulfillment of a “more perfect union” is not possible without an unequivocal acknowledgement of/ and unqualified apology for the “original sins” committed by the European colonialists in brutally, dispossessing the Native people of their lands and the horrific enslavement of Africans to be the economic lifeblood of the “American nation;” a nation conceived to be a “White man’s land.” A more perfect union must be predicated on a new covenant which acknowledges the crimes against humanity committed by European colonialists, the “founding fathers” of this nation and their progeny, and the granting of reparations as restitution to repair and heal the damages done to Native people and Africans.

As a matter of principle, each aggrieved, affected, and offended people must speak for themselves. On behalf of our African ancestors and succeeding generations of unsung heroes and heroines who have historically kept the fight for reparations alive up until the present, which includes the following:

- General Sherman’s Field Order #15 and the promises of 40 acres
- The National Exslave Mutual Relief Bounty and Pension Association led by Sister Callie House
- The Universal Negro Improvement Association / UNIA under the leadership of the Honorable Marcus Mosiah Garvey
- The Nation of Islam under the leadership of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad
- Queen Mother Moore and her Reparations Committee of Descendants of United States Slaves, Inc.
- The Republic of New Africa / RNA and Dr. Imari Obadele
- James Forman and his Black Manifesto reparations demands
- The National Coalition of Reparations for Blacks in America / N`COBRA
- Reparations activist, “Reparations Ray” Jenkins
- Congressman John Conyers
- Massachusetts State Senator Bill Owens
- Malcolm X
- The National Black United Front / NBUF and the December 12th Movement that mobilized the Durban 400

Therefore, the **National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC)** demands that the government of this nation acknowledge the unspeakable crimes committed against African people through enslavement, the institution of chattel slavery, systems of de jure and de facto segregation and other processes of discrimination, denial and exclusion which have severely damaged Black people across generations. We further declare our intent to relentlessly pursue local and state governments and private institutions directly engaged with or complicit in these crimes.

Pursuant to the fulfillment of this historic mission, the National African American Commission, in consultation with broad representation of the Reparations Movement in America, will establish a **National Reparations Trust Authority** to be the repository, custodian and administrative body to receive monetary and material resources, allocated by offending parties as restitution to repair the damages inflicted on the sons and daughters of Africans in America during centuries of oppression and exploitation. The National Reparations Trust Authority will be comprised of a cross-section of credible representatives of reparations, civil rights, human rights, labor, faith, educational, civic and fraternal organizations and institutions. It will be empowered to establish subsidiary **Trust Funds**

to administer projects and initiatives in the areas of culture, economic development, education, health and other fields as deemed appropriate based on the demands in this Reparations Program. While the National Reparations Trust Fund is envisioned as a consensus mechanism for the repository of various forms of restitution, NAARC recognizes and respects the right of other Black organizations or agencies to pursue such compensation at the local, state and national level as well.

We are resolved to educate, mobilize and organize African people and all people of conscience and goodwill to compel this nation to acknowledge and apologize for the wrongs of the past and present and to provide the massive resources required to begin the process of repair and healing. Therefore, we advance a comprehensive program for reparatory justice:

1. A Formal Apology and Establishment of a MAAFA/African Holocaust Institute

A. We demand a formal apology for the role the United States Government played by explicitly and implicitly participating in, encouraging and sanctioning the European Slave Trade and the institution of Chattel Slavery. The apology should be initiated by the President and ratified by the U.S. Congress by roll-call vote.

B. Furthermore, the apology should be accompanied by the establishment of a permanent MAAFA/African Holocaust Institute, charged with providing public education on the origins of enslavement, the role of private and public institutions in initiating and sustaining it; the systems of legal and de facto segregation enacted post-“emancipation” to the present; the damages/harm inflicted on people individually and collectively; and, the wealth and benefits to local, state and the federal government, private institutions and White society in general, derived from these white supremacist institutions and structurally racist policies and practices.

2. The Right of Repatriation and Creation of an African Knowledge Program

A. The descendants of the millions of Africans who were stolen from Africa and transported to the strange lands of the “Americas” against their will to enrich their captors have a right to return to the motherland to an African nation of their choice. Africans in America who choose to exercise the right to return will be provided with sufficient monetary resources to become productive citizens in their new home and shall be aided in their resettlement by a Black controlled agency funded by the federal government to perform this function.

B. The Repatriation Program will be complemented by an African Knowledge Program similar to the one included in the CARICOM Reparations Commissions’ Ten Point Program of Reparatory Justice. This Program will serve to bridge the barriers and heal the wounds between Africans in the U.S. and Africans on the continent, resulting from centuries of enslavement, cultural alienation, misinformation and divide and conquer/exploit schemes initiated by European and American slave traders, colonialists and

neo-colonialists. Emotional Emancipation Healing Circles, research missions and cultural/educational exchanges to build “bridges of belonging” will be part of such a Program.

3. The Right to Land for Social and Economic Development

After centuries of free labor that fueled the commercial and industrial revolutions in the U.S., enriched those at the helm of capital and finance and created opportunities and a sense of privilege” for Europeans of every socio-economic strata, enslaved Africans were “emancipated” without being granted a material stake in the form of land/resources, e.g., “40 acres and a mule,” to start anew in this hostile land. Moreover, formerly enslaved Africans were excluded from government programs like the Homestead Act which greatly benefited poor and working class Whites and corporations. Post-emancipation, land owned by Blacks was often stolen through trickery, fraud and discriminatory policies and practices. These policies and practices were rampant in the Department of Agriculture, especially as carried out by Agricultural Extension Agencies in the South. They drastically stunting the growth and led to the bankruptcy of untold numbers of Black farmers. Therefore we demand:

A. Substantial tracts of government/public land in the South and other regions of the country be transferred to the **National Reparations Trust Authority** with full autonomy in terms equivalent to the sovereignty granted to Native people over reservations awarded to them. These lands are to be utilized for major educational, commercial, industrial, economic/business and health/wellness institutions and enterprises to benefit people of African descent.

B. Funds to support the restoration and enhancement of agricultural development including, grants and loans to limited resource farmers to enable them to expand and compete in the U.S. and global economy.

4. Funds for Cooperative Enterprises and Socially Responsible Entrepreneurial Development

Despite amazing efforts during the colonial, Revolutionary War, Civil War and post-emancipation eras to the present, historically the quest to build a viable and sustained Black business/economic infrastructure has been thwarted by Blacks being pushed out of sectors of the economy like carpentry, brick masonry, catering, tailoring and other crafts and skills, where they dominated in favor of Whites; the malicious destruction of thriving business districts like “Black Wall Street” in Tulsa and towns like Rosewood by White terrorist attacks; the systematic strangulation of Black towns like Hayti, North Carolina; Urban Renewal (“Negro removal”) programs that gutted Black business districts in numerous cities and towns; and discriminatory lending policies which denied Black businesses the capital needed to survive and develop on a competitive basis. Therefore we demand resources to support major Cooperative Enterprises and Socially Responsible Entrepreneurial Development:

A. Funds to develop an infrastructure of strategic financial, commercial, industrial, agricultural and technology-oriented business/economic enterprises for the benefit of Black America as a whole. These enterprises will be managed by Boards of Trustees appointed by the National Reparations Trust Authority.

B. Funds for the establishment of a Black Business Development Bank to provide grants and loans to socially responsible for-profit entrepreneurships/economic ventures, dedicated to building the Black community, utilizing just labor policies and sustainable environmental practices.

5. Resources for the Health, Wellness and Healing of Black Families and Communities

The intergenerational psycho-cultural, mental, spiritual and physical damages of Post Traumatic Slavery Syndrome, the daily toll of racism on individuals, families and communities and the debilitating effects of chronic health disparities resulting from structural/institutional racism are well documented by leading Black psychiatrists, psychologists and physicians. Moreover, many public hospitals and medical facilities that traditionally served Black communities have either been forced to close or are ill-equipped to offer a full range of services for lack of adequate funding. Therefore we demand:

A. Funds for the establishment of a regional system of Black controlled Health and Wellness Centers, fully equipped with highly qualified personnel and the best 21st century facilities to offer culturally appropriate, holistic preventive, mental health and curative treatment services.

B. Funds to strengthen existing hospitals and medical centers serving Black communities, e.g., Harlem Hospital, Howard University Medical Center and the reopening of such institutions that previously served Black communities that closed due to lack of funds.

C. Funds to strengthen institutions like Meharry Medical College, and scholarships for students interested in attending these institutions who are committed to providing a period of service to Black communities.

D. Resources to fully operationalize and institutionalize the use of **Emancipation Healing Circles** as a methodology to address and overcome the damages of Post Traumatic Slavery Syndrome and racism as a disease infecting America's culture and institutions. The aforementioned Health and Wellness Programs are to be implemented in consultation with the National Medical Association, National Dental Association, National Association of Black Nurses, Black Psychiatrists of America, Association of Black Psychologists, Inc., All Healers Mental Health Alliance and similar organizations, institutions and agencies.

6. Education for Community Development and Empowerment

Africans in America have acquired knowledge, produced great inventors, built institutions and developed extraordinary leaders despite calculated efforts to deny Black peo-

ple an education and/or the propagation of misinformation designed to destroy identity, self-esteem and instill obedience to an oppressive system. During enslavement Africans could be punished or even killed for learning to read. Post-emancipation the vast majority of Black young people have been confined to separate and severely under-resourced schools during legal and de facto segregation. These conditions prevail today in what is sometimes called “poor performing schools.” In higher education African Americans have courageously endeavored to build and maintain a system of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), many of which are struggling to survive. Therefore we demand:

A. The allocation of funds for the expansion and consolidation of the National Board of Education of African Ancestry as the body to devise standards and accredit African-Centered educational programming for predominantly Black public schools throughout the country.

B. The provision of monetary and material incentives by the Federal government to school districts which adopt and implement a “Curriculum of Inclusion” of the history and culture of people of African descent in the U.S.

C. Funds to strengthen Historically Black Colleges and Universities as the indispensable backbone of the higher educational infrastructure in Black America.

D. The funding of an endowment to provide free education for students attending HBCUs who are committed to providing service to Black communities.

7. Affordable Housing for Healthy Black Communities and Wealth Generation

Historically people of African descent were denied equitable access to programs within agencies like the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) which White Americans utilized to create prosperous suburbs across the nation and create wealth that could be transferred inter-generationally. Blacks were often victimized by discriminatory covenants that restricted them to certain neighborhoods: “redlining” by banks which refused to make loans to individuals and businesses in targeted neighborhoods and most recently, sub-prime lending schemes which resulted in the loss of billions of dollars in wealth in the form of home equity. The persistence of these discriminatory policies and practices produced an intergenerational deficit in terms of wealth creation that has stunted the social and economic development in Black families and communities.

Therefore we demand the funding of an **African American Housing and Finance Authority** to:

A. Finance the planning and construction of holistic and sustainable “villages” with affordable housing and comprehensive cultural-educational, health and wellness, employment and economic services.

B. Function as a source of grants and loans for persons seeking affordable housing.

8. Strengthening Black America's Information and Communications Infrastructure

From the earliest days of the forced migration of Africans to these hostile shores, communications vehicles like the Black Press have been critical to the survival and development of Black communities. Black America's information and communications infrastructure was built and survives despite operating in a hostile environment and the absence of substantial public and private resources, more readily available to White individual and corporate information/communication media. The most recent conglomeratization of electronic and print media with the blessing of the federal government has been particularly devastating to the maintenance of Black America's information and communications infrastructure. Therefore we demand:

A. An annual federal set-aside of advertising dollars to support Black owned newspapers and magazines and radio and television stations. These funds would be administered by the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) and National Association of Black Owned Broadcasters (NABOB) under the guidance of the Reparations Trust Authority.

B. Funding for a national non-profit, non-commercial newspaper, radio and television network dedicated exclusively to cultural-education, economic/business and civic engagement programming for the benefit of Black America.

9. Preserving Black Sacred Sites and Monuments

The struggle for freedom, dignity, self-determination and community/national development is a saga of a people in a strange land resisting, surviving, maintaining families, building institutions and creating a future in the face of unspeakable oppression, exploitation, terror and violence. All across this land there are slave quarters, hundreds of sites where Black people were lynched, and locales where Black towns and institutions were destroyed. But, there are also Black burial grounds, Black towns, e.g. Nicodumus, Kansas, Mt. Bayou, Mississippi, houses of worship, meeting halls, one-room schools and other significant institutions that speak to the triumphant quest of a determined people to create a new African community in this hostile land.

These Black Sacred Sites and Monuments must be preserved as permanent memorials to continuously inform and inspire future generations of people of African descent about this legacy of trials, tribulations and triumph and to remind America of the white supremacist terror employed to obstruct the path to freedom of African Americans. Therefore we demand:

A. The federal government via the National Parks Service erect markers on every site where a Black person was lynched, where a massacre of Black people was committed and sites where Black towns or neighborhood were destroyed.

B. Funds for the preservation of Black Burial Grounds and other significant cultural/historical sites.

C. Funds to conduct research to identify previously unknown Black Sacred Sites and Monuments.

10. Repairing the Damages of the “Criminal Injustice System”

Ever since the forced arrival of enslaved Africans in the Americas, policing and penal policies and practices were enacted to discipline, control and acclimate Black people to systems of exploitation. The “Criminal Injustice System” which evolved was/is a direct extension and protector of the interests of the corporate and political elites in the U.S. From runaway slave patrols, vagrancy laws, chain gangs, the convict lease system to relentless police violence, killings and mass incarceration, racist policies and practices have decimated Black communities and severely constrained civil rights, human rights and the socio-economic and political aspirations of Black people. The “War on Drugs” with its attendant racially - biased policies and practices is the most recent manifestation of this longstanding war on Black people. It has disrupted millions of Black families and severely damaged Black communities across the country. The “criminal injustice system” has been a persistent source of resentment, resistance and rebellion by Black people. Apologies from elected officials, leaders and institutions responsible for fostering and benefiting politically from this unjust system are not sufficient. The damages to Black families and communities must be repaired.

Therefore, we demand:

A. Substantial resources to establish a Black controlled Agency for Returning Citizens:

- To fund Centers in Black communities nationwide to provide culturally appropriate counseling, career development services and job/employment training for formerly incarcerated persons.
- Provide grants to create entrepreneurial/business opportunities in communities damaged by mass incarceration.

B. Restoration of Voting Rights for all formerly incarcerated persons.

C. The exoneration of the Honorable Marcus Mosiah Garvey as the first victim of a “Cointelpro” type operation by J. Edgar Hoover’s FBI.

D. The release of all Political Prisoners and Prisoners of War unjustly convicted of acts of conscious committed resisting and defending Black people from an oppressive system.

E. Revising/amending the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, which formally abolished slavery, to delete the clause: “except as a punishment for crime whereof the party

shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction” - which implies that Black people convicted of crimes can be legally held in bondage.

The Call to Action and Healing

“We have come, over a way that with tears has been watered. We have come threading our path thro’ the blood of the slaughtered. Out of our gloomy past, till now we stand at last, where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.”

In submitting these demands the National African American Reparations Commission calls upon people of African descent to fully engage the struggle to achieve repair for the centuries of enslavement, legal and de facto segregation, systematic exclusion and violent and repressive policies and practices which have damaged Black families and communities across generations. We declare that the struggle for reparations is itself an integral part of the internal healing process which must occur as we strive to build just, humane and wholesome communities. By educating, mobilizing and organizing to win reparations, we create greater collective awareness of and honor the trials, tribulations, blood, suffering, sacrifice, survival, triumph and achievements of our ancestors. We are healed and made whole by being in communion with our ancestors and continuing the struggle for reparations and the liberation of people of African descent, Black people, in their name. The struggle continues!

National African American Reparations Commission

Dedicated to the Memory of Queen Audley Mother Moore

Dr. Conrad Worrill, Director of the Carruthers Center for Inner-City Studies, Northeastern University; Chicago, Illinois

Dr. Ray Winbush, Director of the Institute for Urban Research, Morgan State University, Baltimore, Maryland

Dr. Iva Carruthers, General Secretary, Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Chicago, Illinois

Professor Charles Ogletree, Executive Director, Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice, Harvard University, Boston, Massachusetts

Rev. Dr. Jeremiah Wright, Pastor Emeritus, Trinity United Church of Christ, Chicago, Illinois

Atty. Roger Wareham, December 12th Movement, New York, New York

Rev. JoAnn Watson, Former Detroit City Councilwoman, Detroit, Michigan

Atty. Nkechi Taifa, Criminal Justice Reform and Reparations Activist, Washington, D.C.

Dr. Julianne Malveaux, Political Economist and President Emeritus, Bennett College for Women, Washington, D.C.

Nana Dr. Patricia Newton, CEO, Black Psychiatrists of America, Baltimore, Maryland

Yvette Modestin, Founder and Executive Director, Encuentro Diaspora and IBW Board Member, Boston, Massachusetts

Salim Adofo, Vice-President, Black United Front, Washington, D.C.

Kamm Howard, National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations In America, Chicago, Illinois

Dr. Joyce King, Benjamin E. Mays Endowed Chair for Urban Teaching, Learning and Leadership, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.

Dr. V.P. Franklin, Editor, Journal of African American History, New Orleans

Adebukola Ajao, Co-founder, We Are the Ones, blogger for the Huffington Post, Boston, MA

Minister Akbar Muhammad, Nation of Islam, St. Louis

Convened by the Institute of the Black World 21st Century

Dr. Ron Daniels, President, New York, NY

Don Rojas, Director of Communications, Baltimore, MD

RESOLUTION NO. 20-_____

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING COMMUNITY REPARATIONS FOR BLACK ASHEVILLE

WHEREAS, Black People have been unjustly Enslaved; and

WHEREAS, Black People have been unjustly Segregated; and

WHEREAS, Black people have been unjustly Incarcerated; and

WHEREAS, Black People have been denied housing through racist practices in the private realty market, including redlining, steering, blockbusting, denial of mortgages, and gentrification; and

WHEREAS, Black People have been denied housing, displaced and inadequately housed by government housing policies that include discriminatory VA/FHA practices, Urban Renewal, and a variety of local and federal “affordable” housing programs; and

WHEREAS, Black People have been consistently and widely impoverished by discriminatory wages paid in every sector of the local economy regardless of credentials and experience; and

WHEREAS, Black People have experienced disproportionate unemployment rates and reduced opportunities to fully participate in the local job market; and

WHEREAS, Black People have been systematically excluded from historic and present private economic development and community investments and, therefore, black-owned businesses have not received the benefits of these investments; and

WHEREAS, Black people have been segregated from mainstream education and within present day school programs that include AG, AP, and Honors; and

WHEREAS, Black students have experienced the denial of education through admission, retention and graduation rates of every level of education in WNC and through discriminatory disciplinary practices; and

WHEREAS, Black People historically and presently receive inadequate, if not detrimental, health care as exemplified by disproportionate morbidities and mortality rates that result from the generational trauma of systemic racism, discriminatory treatment by medical professionals, and discriminatory medical practices such as involuntary sterilizations, denial of adequate testing, denial of preventative and curative procedures; and

WHEREAS, Black People have been unjustly targeted by law enforcement and criminal justice procedures, incarcerated at disproportionate rates and subsequently excluded from full participation in the benefits of citizenship that include voting, employment, housing and health care; and

WHEREAS, Black People have disproportionately been forced to reside in, adjacent to, or near Brown Zones and other toxic sites that negatively impact their health and property; and

WHEREAS, Black People have disproportionately been limited to the confined routes of travel provided by public transportation; and

WHEREAS, Black People have disproportionately suffered from the isolation of food deserts and childcare deserts;

WHEREAS, systemic racism was created over centuries and will take time to dismantle;

WHEREAS, state and federal governments have a responsibility to adopt programs, policies, and funding to address reparations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The City Council of the City of Asheville:

(1) apologizes and makes amends for its participation in and sanctioning of the Enslavement of Black People;

(2) apologizes and makes amends for its enforcement of segregation and its accompanying discriminatory practices;

(3) apologizes and makes amends for carrying out an urban renewal program that destroyed multiple, successful black communities;

(4) calls on other organizations and institutions in Asheville that have advanced and benefitted from racial inequity to join the city in its apologies and invites them to address racism within their own structures and programs and to work with the city to more comprehensively address systemic racism;

(5) calls on the State of North Carolina and the federal government to initiate policymaking and provide funding for reparations at the state and national levels;

(6) directs the City Manager to establish a process within the next year to develop short, medium and long term recommendations to specifically address the creation of generational wealth and to boost economic mobility and opportunity in the black community;

(7) fully supports its equity department, staff and its work, and encourages the city manager to utilize their talents when forming policy and programs that will establish the creation of generational wealth and address reparations due in the black community as mentioned above;

(8) seeks to establish within the next year, a new commission 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. Other local government community

organizations may also be invited to have representation on the Commission. The task of the Community 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 and long term priorities and plans. Accountability for achieving equity will be enforced in the appropriate offices. The report and the resulting budgetary and programmatic priorities may include but not be limited to increasing minority homeownership and access to other affordable housing, increasing minority business ownership and career opportunities, strategies to grow equity and generational wealth, closing the gaps in health care, education, employment and pay, neighborhood safety and fairness within criminal justice;

(9) calls on the city manager to give, at minimum, a bi-annual update to the city council on the progress of work performed pursuant to this resolution.

Read, approved and adopted this 14th day of July, 2020.

City Clerk

Mayor

Approved as to form:

City Attorney