



DATE: March 26, 2024

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Assistant City Manager

SUBJECT: Russell City Reparative Justice Project: Work Session to Receive the Recommendations from the Russell City Reparative Justice Project Steering Committee

RECOMMENDATION

That the City Council: 1) receives the Russell City Reparative Justice Project Steering Committee presentation on recommendations for reparative justice actions; 2) reviews supporting documents including the Ceres Research Group's report, San Francisco State University's research, and outcomes of the community ranking survey to prioritize recommendations for reparative justice actions, and 3) directs City of Hayward staff on next steps and a timeline for further analysis.

SUMMARY

The Russell City Reparative Justice Project (RCRJP) is the City of Hayward's response to a recommendation of its Community Services Commission, which called for the City to work with former Russell City residents and descendants to determine reparative justice actions for the City of Hayward's involvement in inequitable treatment and the forced relocation of Russell City Community members. The Russell City Reparative Justice Project Steering Committee was developed to facilitate a community-led engagement process which resulted in the development of reparative justice recommendations. There were various phases of community engagement, research, and public input, which informed the Russell City Reparative Justice Project Steering Committee recommendations being shared for Hayward City Council consideration.

BACKGROUND

- **June 17, 2020 – July 21, 2020** – Hayward Community Services Commission (CSC) called for further action by the City of Hayward in its commitment to anti-racism and began to draft an apology.
- **September 18, 2021** – Hayward Community Services Commission (CSC) approved a draft of an apology to Black, Indigenous, Californio, Mexicano, Latino, Latinx and other

community members of color for racially disparate impacts and inequities resulting from past City policy and decision-making, and recommended City Council work with the survivors and descendants of Russell City to determine appropriate restitution.

- **November 16, 2021** – The Hayward City Council voted unanimously to approve the resolution to apologize to Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and people of color for the City’s implicit and explicit role in perpetuating institutional racism.
- **January 29, 2022** – During the City of Hayward Strategic Roadmap prioritization session, Council directed staff to work with the survivors and descendants of Russell City (regardless of race) to determine appropriate restitution through a community-led process.
- **September 2022 – November 2022** – During the Pre-Work Phase, the City of Hayward secured San Francisco State University (SF State) consultants to conduct fact-finding and academic research. City staff and SF State researchers identified former residents and descendants. Following, the Russell City Reparative Justice Project (RCRJP) Steering Committee governing structure was developed.
- **November 2022 – July 2023** – During this phase, the Russell City Reparative Justice Project Steering Committee created a leadership and decision-making framework. Additionally, the committee selected Ceres Research Group to synthesize academic and community-based research, advise on reparative justice models, and provide project management support.
- **June 2023 – March 2024** – During this phase, the Russell City Reparative Justice Project Steering Committee directed the community-led process to engage Russell City stakeholders in development of recommendations for appropriate reparative justice solutions.
- **March 26, 2024** – The Russell Justice City Reparative Justice Project Steering Committee will share their recommendations, and community members will be invited to make public comments.

DISCUSSION

For over a year, Russell City residents and descendants have worked collaboratively with City of Hayward staff and consultants to identify reparative justice solutions in response to Hayward City Council’s unanimous decision in 2021 to apologize for the City’s role in perpetuating systemic racism. Input from community-led and data-driven processes was used to generate recommendations on repairing harm caused to Russell City residents and descendants.

The Ceres Research Group was selected by the Russell City Reparative Justice Project Steering Committee to support the community-led process. Ceres Research Group took direction from the RCRJP Steering Committee to complete a series of outreach, engagement, and analytical tasks to support the creation of recommendations. These included:

- hosting a planning retreat where a harm reduction framework was created,
- analyzing public records and media data from the San Francisco State University consultants, and

- conducting a statistically significant survey of Russell City residents and descendants (n=377) which led to the creation of the twenty-six (26) recommendations noted in Attachment II (List of Recommendations) and Attachment IV (Reclaiming Russell City Report).

From January 2024 to March 2024, the Russell City Reparative Justice Project Steering Committee engaged in a series of meetings and exercises to prioritize recommendations on reparative justice solutions. These included discussions on the findings in a series of meetings and the completion of a prioritization exercise in February 2024, noted at the end of Attachment IV (RCRJP Steering Committee Work Session Presentation and Supporting Documents). This baseline feedback on prioritizing the recommendations was used to inform prioritization exercises with the public.

To further validate the input from the RCRJP Steering Committee, community input was sought out through a public meeting and ranking survey. On February 21, 2024, the RCRJP Steering Committee hosted a public meeting attended by 60 people where the 26 recommendations were discussed. Additionally, the City of Hayward took direction from the RCRJP Steering Committee leadership to administer a ranking survey between February 16, 2024, and March 1, 2024. A total of 198 people took the survey (of which 101 respondents ranked the list of 26 recommendations). Attachment III (Recommendation Ranking Survey Results) visualizes the responses to the ranking survey.

Overall, recommendations related to restitution and compensation were top priorities of the RCRJP Steering Committee and the 101 survey respondents. Free education, scholarships, and the development of a community fund were also identified as high priorities in the ranking survey. See page 13 of Attachment III (Recommendation Ranking Survey Results) for more details.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

This item delivers on the of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Strategic Roadmap projects. Under the Enhance Community Safety and Quality of Life strategic priority, within the Strengthen Justice and Belonging section, initiative Q27 is to, “Work with the survivors and descendants of Russell City to determine appropriate restitution.”

EQUITY IMPACT

This project centered on equity in all aspects of its work. The Russell City Reparative Justice Project worked to assess the City of Hayward’s role in perpetuating systemic racism and used community-led and equity-centered approaches to develop recommendations.

The community-led process was informed by a series of training and project management supports which aided the Russell City Reparative Justice Project Steering Committee and other stakeholders with understanding foundational equity information, such as:

- summaries of the United Nations and other frameworks for reparations;

- definitions and historical reviews of structural racism (including the roles of structures and processes in creating disparate outcomes);
- historical reviews of public policy and private institution actions that produced racial segregation in the United States;
- historical reviews of the initiation of racial segregation of Black, Latinx, and Native American people in urban areas driven by policy and migration timelines; and
- reflections on best practices in crafting reparative justice solutions that are holistic and sustainable.

FISCAL IMPACT

Receiving and reviewing the Russell City Reparative Justice Project recommendations has no fiscal impact. There will be fiscal impacts related to the various recommendations presented. However, these will not be known until staff pursues further research and analysis based on Council direction.

PUBLIC CONTACT

There has been extensive community engagement since September 2022 to ensure the voices of Russell City residents and descendants were centered in developing reparative justice recommendations. Once created, the Russell City Reparative Justice Project Steering Committee led community input and public contact efforts with support from City of Hayward staff and consultants. Past public meetings are posted online ([found here](#)).

Most recently, there was a February 21, 2024, Russell City Reparative Justice Project [Steering Committee Public Meeting](#) attended by 60 members of the public. Further, from February 16, 2024 to March 1, 2024, there was a survey to prioritize potential recommendations which resulted in 101 people ranking the proposed recommendations. A stakeholder list of hundreds of people is contacted periodically with project updates.

NEXT STEPS

Following the March 26, 2024, work session at City Council, the project will transition to the implementation phase where City Council action and direction to staff is needed to move forward with recommended reparative justice actions.

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