



**DATE:** July 15, 2020

**TO:** Community Services Commission

**FROM:** Subcommittee of Community Services Commission

**SUBJECT:** Commissioner Letter of Support

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Community Services Commission reviews the letter of support prepared by a subcommittee of Commissioners, provides comments, and takes action on its transmittal.

### **DISCUSSION**

At the June 17, 2020 Community Services Commission (CSC) meeting, staff presented on the City's Racial Equity Action Plan and the Government Alliance for Racial Equity (GARE) cohort details. The Commissioners provided feedback on the plan and a subset of Commissioners requested to write a letter of support for review and approval by the full CSC. A subcommittee was formed with Commissioner Berry, Commissioner Chauhan, Commissioner Guzman, Commissioner Garg, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Moore, and Commissioner Vasaure to draft a letter of support for the full CSC to review. For CSC consideration, the letter of support is included below:

Dear Mayor Halliday and City Council Members,

We find ourselves in a long overdue moment where we are grappling nationally and locally with the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshard Brooks and all the (named and unnamed) Black lives preceding them struck down by a system of policing that was never meant to protect them.

The Community Services Commission (CSC) affirms that Black Lives Matter. We stand in solidarity with the calls for reparations to Black communities across this country. We acknowledge the painful legacy of chattel slavery and its impacts across generations of Black people on whose backs this country was and is built. We honor the fact that descendants of enslaved Black people are owed compensation not only for what their ancestors endured but also for what they continue to endure. In this affirmation, we express our support for the national and local efforts surrounding the Movement for Black Lives and Defunding of the Police.

While Hayward is regularly touted for its ethnic and racial diversity, it is not immune from the long history of racism and the modern insidious nature of racism. From the displacement of the Yrgin people and theft of Ohlone land; redlining, title restrictions, and racial covenants that pushed Black people to rural, unincorporated outskirts like Russell City; the subsequent erasure of Russell City by City of Hayward, resulting in the erasure of a musically rich touchstone of local Black culture; to present-day gentrification that economically drives out Black community members; the City of Hayward must reckon with its multiple accumulated, unpaid debts to our Black, Indigenous, and Brown residents. Hayward continues to criminalize Black, Indigenous, and Brown communities via investments in increased policing that far too often robs Black and Brown bodies of life and dignity. Before us is an opportunity - as a community - to make real steps toward rectifying the ills and errors of these transgressions.

The CSC is responsible for making recommendations for the annual distribution of approximately \$2 million in Federal and Local funding to support various community services targeted to the most vulnerable residents of Hayward. As part of this responsibility, the CSC has already adopted the use of a racial equity lens in our funding recommendations. We intend to go even further to ensure Black community members - who are over-represented among the vulnerable population our services funding targets - are appropriately supported and resourced. To address this, we not only need to fund these services, but also look at all social services housed within and funded by the City of Hayward to address the root causes of this disparate need.

We support the recent approval of the Racial Equity Action Plan to forward anti-racist policies, to use a Racial Equity lens in budgeting for all city services, contracting, and hiring; and to ensure all city staff and council members are provided implicit bias and racial equity training within the next fiscal year. In the present landscape the most pressing issue amongst this pursuit of racial equity and racial justice is the effort is to reimagine Public Safety through a lens of racial equity that decouples Public Safety from systems of policing, which invariably lead to violence against Black, Indigenous, and Brown bodies. The verbal expressions of support for Black Lives we've heard from many of you are important, and we look forward to seeing those coupled with concrete actions that address the racial disparities across our city.

The Community Services Commission is using this moment as an opportunity of self-reflection to review our own processes and establish how we can support this movement long-term within the scope of our commission. Attachment II outlines our own commitments and intentions regarding our own work as a commission. Attachment III is the Policy and enumerated Powers and Duties of the Community Services Commission per the Hayward Municipal Code.

The inimitable Angela Y. Davis says, "in a racist society, it is not enough to be non-racist, we must be anti-racist." As the Community Services Commission strives to ground its work in anti-racism as an extension of the racial equity framework, we invite you all to meet us on that field of anti-racism so Black residents of Hayward - and by extension all residents of Hayward - can thrive in our community.

**NEXT STEPS**

Upon consideration and approval by the CSC, staff will provide an informational memo to the City Council with the CSC's letter of support. In addition, the subcommittee also prepared specific recommendations to Council regarding statements, policies, and direction it feels are appropriate for Council to take at this time (Attachment IV), although not requested as part of the CSC's previous direction. Any future CSC action on Attachment IV will require further staff review and analysis and will need to occur on a future agenda after the City Council on July 21, 2020 provides direction to staff on the community engagement plan for addressing the City's efforts to reform policing in Hayward..

Prepared By: Subcommittee of Community Services Commission