Dear Members of the Saint Paul City Council,

I am writing to request that the Saint Paul Reparations Community Commission be formally briefed on the current status of the Harm Study RFP and the council's deliberations regarding the selection process. As a commissioner and elder serving on this body, I believe it is essential that we uphold the intent of the ordinance establishing the Reparations Commission — to ensure that the work of reparative justice in our city is community-led, transparent, and accountable.

I want to state clearly that I am not in support of the city independently deciding on the proposals without the involvement of the commission. Likewise, I am not in support of moving forward with a process that did not include or engage our legacy Black institutions and organizations across the Twin Cities. This exclusion not only undermines trust but also disregards the deep expertise that already exists within our community.

My concern is that this commission is not being treated as a decision-making body as outlined in our ordinance. Major decisions are being made without full discussion, participation, or consensus from the commissioners. As someone who has served on review panels with the Minnesota Department of Health and other major foundations, I can say with confidence that our commission members have the knowledge and expertise to evaluate proposals and ensure fairness in the selection process.

At this time, commissioners have not been adequately informed about actions taken by the chair, who appears to have made unilateral decisions without formal consultation or vote from the body. Furthermore, there has been no clear plan presented or approved regarding how the $250,000 will be spent. The ordinance establishing this commission requires that all recommendations be reviewed and formally voted upon before advancing to the City Council — a step that has not occurred in the process for the Harm Study.

Therefore, I am respectfully requesting that the City Council pause the current RFP selection process and direct the Reparations Commission to review the RFP, design the selection process, and make a formal recommendation to the council. The brief updates presented in our recent meetings have not been sufficient or informative for commissioners to exercise our full responsibilities.

This work is too important to rush or sidestep. The credibility of this effort depends on ensuring that the community most impacted — particularly Rondo — has a genuine and leading role in shaping this process from the very beginning.

With respect and commitment to justice,

Elder Regina Jackson
Ward 1
856 Carroll Avenue

Commissioner, Saint Paul