CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission Update

Presented by Veronica Burt – Legislative Aide

City Council Policy Committee • June 11, 2025

Labor Acknowledgement

View: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83eJfEFFZ74 (The Rise of Cotton: Crash Course Black American History)

PICKING COTTON
From Department of Agriculture Bulletin, "The Cotton Plant."

We acknowledge that much of America, including its culture, economic growth, and development has been made possible by the forced free labor of enslaved Africans and their descendants who suffered the horror of the transatlantic slave trade, chattel slavery, Jim Crow segregation and acts of racism – all culminating into modern day disparities. We pay homage to these ancestors and ask that they guide the efforts of the Reparations Commissions to correct these wrongs for those who are living and those who are yet born.

Original source: Melanie Johnson - Associate Director of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the College of Liberal Arts, University of Minnesota. Modified by Veronica Burt - Reparations Commission/City Council Legislative Aide, The Office of the St. Paul City Council 3.27.2024

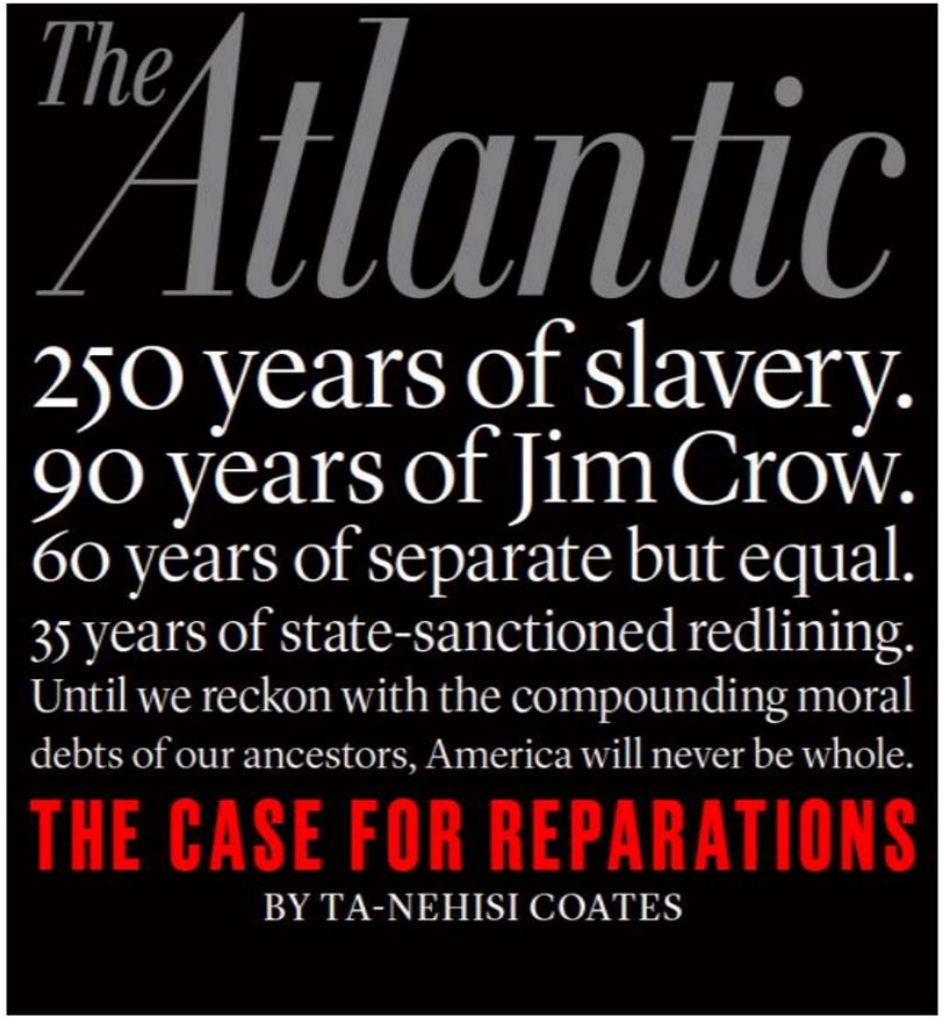
Definition

Reparations are forms of compensation provided to those who have suffered wrongdoing or to their descendants and may refer to payments made in the aftermath of war, slavery, or other forms of wide-scale systemic injustice.

Reparations typically consist of monetary payments, but they can also consist of goods, materials, or reparatory actions intended to account for such damages or to address ongoing injustice.

In the United States, ***reparations*** have been made to certain groups and proposed for others. Discussion of the topic often involves proposals to make ***reparations*** to people who have been the victims of brutal treatment and racist policies throughout U.S. history, including Native Americans and the Black Americans who are the descendants of the African people enslaved in the U.S.

Source: www.dictionary.com/browse/reparations#word-of-the-day



Enactments

- Resolution 21-77 (January 13, 2021) formed the **Reparations Legislative Advisory Committee** to create the framework for a permanent reparations commission which came to be known as the Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission.

- Ordinance 22-52 (January 4, 2023) established the **Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission** to advise the City Council and Mayor in all policy and budget matters pertaining to reparations within the city.

- Resolution 23-939 (June 28, 2023) **Appointed** Commissioners: Jamila Pickett, Khulia Pringle, and Nick Khaliq to terms of one year; Carla Robinson, Idman Ibrahim, Joseph Bloedoorn, and Nick Muhammed to terms of two years; and Arthur McCoy, Nila Gouldin, Trahern Crews, and Jeremie English to terms of three years.

- Resolution 25-175 (Feb. 5, 2025) **Reappointed** Commissioners: Jamila Pickett, Khulia Pringle, and Nick Khaliq

- Resolution 25-724 (May 21, 2025) **Appointed** Commissioner: Marquita Cammon

Commission Purpose

Chapter 112.01 of the Administrative Code states: the Reparations Commission is to serve as an advisory body to the Mayor and City Council on matters related to repairing the damage caused by public and private systemic racism in the City of Saint Paul which resulted in racial disparities in generational wealth, home ownership, health care, education, employment and pay, and fairness within the criminal justice system among the American descendants of chattel slavery.

Commission Powers

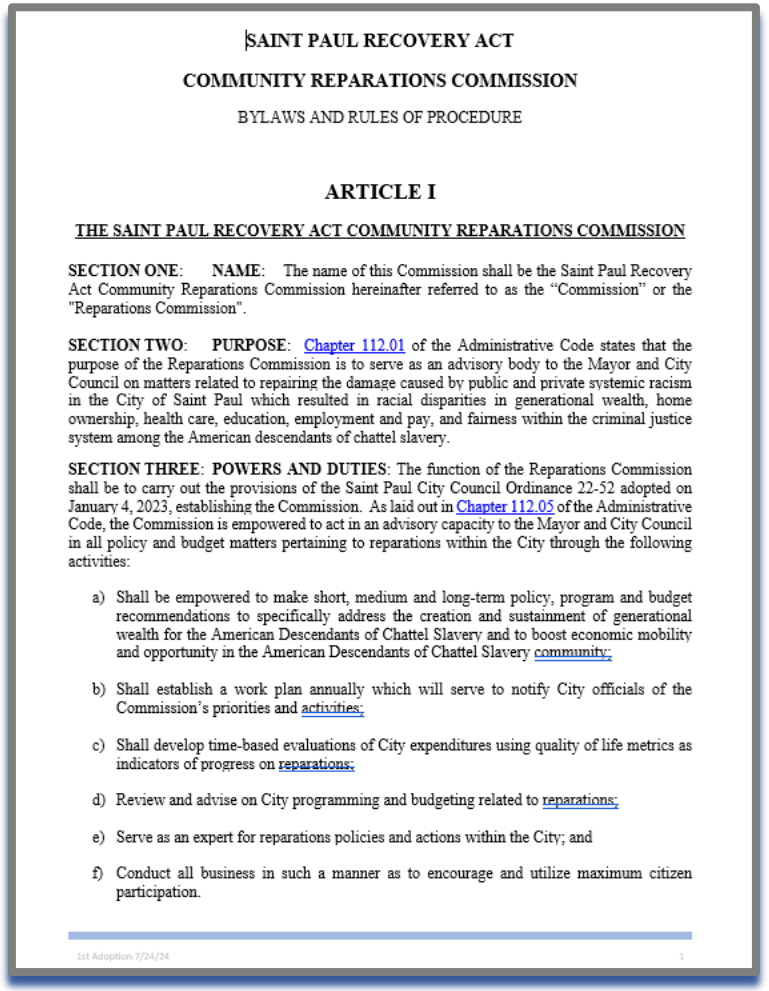
Chapter 112.05 empowers the Commission to act in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and City Council in all policy and budget matters pertaining to reparations within the City through the following activities:

a. Make short, medium and long-term policy, program and budget recommendations to specifically address the creation and sustainment of generational wealth for the American Descendants of Chattel Slavery and to boost economic mobility and opportunity in the American Descendants of Chattel Slavery community;
b. Establish a work plan annually which will serve to notify City officials of the Commission's priorities and activities;
c. Develop time-based evaluations of City expenditures using quality of life metrics as indicators of progress on reparations;
d. Review and advise on City programming and budgeting related to reparations;
a. Serve as an expert for reparations policies and actions within the City; and
b. Conduct all business in such a manner as to encourage and utilize maximum citizen participation.

Key Updates

Recap (March 2024 – Aug. 2025)

- Hired 1.5 Staff
- Began Meeting/Elected Officers
- Approved 4th Wed. for Monthly Meeting
- Adopted Bylaws
- Recommended a $500,000 Budget Request for 2025



SAINT PAUL RECOVERY ACT

COMMUNITY REPARATIONS COMMISSION

BYLAWS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE

ARTICLE I

THE SAINT PAUL RECOVERY ACT COMMUNITY REPARATIONS COMMISSION

SECTION ONE: **NAME**: The name of this Commission shall be the Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission hereinafter referred to as the "Commission" or the "Reparations Commission".

SECTION TWO: **PURPOSE**: Chapter 112.01 of the Administrative Code states that the purpose of the Reparations Commission is to serve as an advisory body to the Mayor and City Council on matters related to repairing the damage caused by public and private systemic racism in the City of Saint Paul which resulted in racial disparities in generational wealth, home ownership, health care, education, employment and pay, and fairness within the criminal justice system among the American descendants of chattel slavery.

SECTION THREE: **POWERS AND DUTIES**: The function of the Reparations Commission shall be to carry out the provisions of the Saint Paul City Council Ordinance 22-52 adopted on January 4, 2023, establishing the Commission. As laid out in Chapter 112.05 of the Administrative Code, the Commission is empowered to act in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and City Council in all policy and budget matters pertaining to reparations within the City through the following activities:

a) Shall be empowered to make short, medium and long-term policy, program and budget recommendations to specifically address the creation and sustainment of generational wealth for the American Descendants of Chattel Slavery and to boost economic mobility and opportunity in the American Descendants of Chattel Slavery community;

b) Shall establish a work plan annually which will serve to notify City officials of the Commission's priorities and activities;

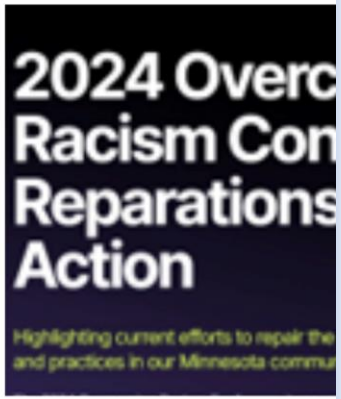
c) Shall develop time-based evaluations of City expenditures using quality of life metrics as indicators of progress on reparations;

d) Review and advise on City programming and budgeting related to reparations;

e) Serve as an expert for reparations policies and actions within the City; and

f) Conduct all business in such a manner as to encourage and utilize maximum citizen participation.

Key Updates



Current (Sept 2024 – May 2025)

- **$250,000 Budget Approval**
- **Adopted Workplan & Formulated Committees**
  - Reparatory Justice Fund & Slavery Disclosure/Redress Ordinance
  - Community Listening Sessions
  - Harm Report
  - Legal Question
  - Glossary, Resource List Update, Historical Timeline, Archival Work
  - 2025 Budget Proposal, Commissioner Educational Development
- **Enhanced Commissioner Education**
  - Meeting Guest Speakers
    - Genealogy
    - Evanston, IL Reparations
    - Council Budget Process
    - Rondo Inheritance Fund
    - City Procurement/RFP Process
  - Participation in Local & National Events
    - Black Lives Matter MN - National Conference
    - Facilitating Racial Equity Collaborative – Overcoming Racism Conference: Reparations in Action
    - American Descendants of Slavery (ADOS) Advocacy Foundation – National Reparations Summit
    - First Repair - National Symposium for State and Local Reparations
- **Officer/Commissioner Reappointments + New Commissioner Appointments**
- **Approved Preparation of an RFP to conduct a Harm Report**

Key Updates

Upcoming (June 2025 – Dec. 2025)

- Harm Report Researchers
- Update Workplan
- Additional Commissioner Appointments
- Unity Church Donation
- Administrative Citations Legislative Advisory Committee
- Listening Sessions

Questions?