



SOURCE: DR. SEAN ANGST, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA FULLERTON, 2019

# NATIONAL REPARATIONS FUNDING LANDSCAPE REPORT

JUNE 2024

# CONTENTS

*03*

WHO WE ARE

---

*04*

RESEARCH QUESTIONS &  
APPROACH

---

*05*

THE LOS ANGELES CONTEXT

---

*07*

THE DATA

---

*08*

METHODOLOGY

---

*09*

WHO ARE THE EXPERTS?

---

*10*

REPARATIONS FRAMEWORKS

*11*

HISTORICAL HARMS: JAPANESE  
INTERNMENT REPARATIONS

---

*14*

HISTORICAL HARMS: HOLOCAUST  
REPARATIONS

---

*15*

CONTEMPORARY REPARATIONS  
CASE STUDIES

---

*19*

KEY FINDINGS

---

*20*

KEY QUESTIONS

---

*21*

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS: FINDING  
AN ALIGNED INTERMEDIARY

---

*22*

KEY TAKEAWAYS: MUNICIPAL  
MOBILIZATION &  
COLLABORATION

# WHO WE ARE: POSITIONALITY & FRAMING

Mockingbird Analytics (MA) has been contracted by the City of Los Angeles to conduct research on potential funding and fiscal models for reparations. As a multiracial organization led by predominantly white women, MA understands the importance of this transformative project. MA is committed to equity, social justice, and anti-racism in our work. As such, this project is in full alignment with the vision and purpose of the organization. MA utilizes the following as a framework for this research:

- Reparations is an *ongoing opportunity* to support Black and African-American residents in Los Angeles and, as such, models for long-term sustainability will be presented and recommended .
- Funding models and opportunities will be multifaceted using data from non-profit, government, and philanthropic organizations.
- Reparations funding is an opportunity to repair past and ongoing harm that affects the descendants of those formerly enslaved. It is not a handout or form of charity.
- The goal of reparations is to honor and attune to the lived experiences of Black and African-American residents of Los Angeles. This research will center these experiences, including, but not limited to, needs and strengths.
- An orientation towards addressing anti-Black racism will remain forefront in this work, including but not limited to understanding the multi-generational financial effects of Black enslavement on Black and African-American residents of Los Angeles.

This project examine how the strengths and needs of African-American and Black residents in LA have been shaped through generations of trauma and transformative change. MA will ensure these aforementioned principles serve as a guiding framework for the research and evidence-based recommendations to the City of Los Angeles.

The MA research agenda seeks to dismantle systems of oppression and generate healing spaces for self-determination. This approach requires a strong, fundamental knowledge of critical race and Black feminist theories to assess the roots of place-based inequities as well as the strategies that communities use to redistribute resources toward sustainable justice. Dr. Joél Arvizo-Zavala initiated this project and has continued to provide tremendous mentorship and advising. Currently, Dr. Marisa Turesky leads our research team, bringing over a decade of experience to advance racial equity and healing through participatory action research. Previous projects include racial impact statements and decarceral policy evaluations. Our clients and partners include both community groups and think tanks, such as Equity Research Institute, the United Ways of California, and the SELA Collaborative. As activist-scholars, our team uses a social movements lens to build leadership and learning for partners and clients to achieve their own revolutionary policies and practices.

Sincerely,

Jessica Payne, MPL  
Founder/CEO, Mockingbird Analytics

Dr. Marisa Turesky  
Director of Research, Mockingbird Analytics

# REPARATIONS IN LOS ANGELES: RESEARCH QUESTIONS & APPROACH

The MA team used their research and organizing expertise to critically examine fiscal models to begin repairing the harm done by systemic anti-Black racism in the City of Los Angeles. As a participatory research study, the City and MA co-created the following research questions:

- 1. What are the benefits and critiques of various models used to fund reparations programs?**
- 2. How have models been codified or cemented as policy initiatives or legislation?**
- 3. What, if any, are the challenges to these funding models?**

To begin answering these questions, MA used three main approaches to generate exploratory hypotheses:

1. Examine how media outlets cover reparations work through daily Google alerts
2. Examine how key cities with known or budding reparations programs structure the leadership and funding models
3. Review relevant research on the economics of reparations to guide key approaches and perspectives related to the project, while ensuring the implementation of evidence-based practices

Based on coded results from these initial approaches, MA triangulated these frameworks with original qualitative data from semi-structured interviews. The City and MA co-created a target group of cross-sector reparations subject matter experts and officials from municipalities and community-

based organizations that have funded, or tried to fund, reparations efforts. The results from this study will inform how the City of Los Angeles will develop a long-term, sustainable funding strategy for a reparations pilot program.

Mockingbird Analytics took four main approaches to this National Reparations Funding Landscape Research for the City of Los Angeles' Reparations Study:

- Conducting in-depth interviews with subject matter experts and municipal officials from places that have begun funding local repair efforts across the country.
- Identifying and analyzing trends across case sites and sectors with a critical focus on funding mechanisms.
- Analyzing the landscape for a local intermediary organization for the City to align to develop administrative support in a disbursement process.
- Interpreting how the City could benefit from collaboration, the City's uniquely racialized history of harm, and transformative Black leadership toward an application of the Compensation section of the United Nation's International Reparations Framework ([UN 2006](#)).

Collectively, these approaches have allowed Mockingbird Analytics to have a well-rounded perspective on the landscape of funding opportunities.



# THE LOS ANGELES CONTEXT

Based on the large size and scope of the City of LA, the scale of an LA reparations program would require a major scaling of any existing or budding municipal reparations program. As historical reparations programs will demonstrate, the large scale of a reparations program can prove to be one of the greatest barriers to implementing a reparations program. Comparative statistics for other reparations program case sites analyzed in this report demonstrate LA's distinction:

**City of Los Angeles** total population: 3.2 million  
LA Black population: 332,173  
(US Census, 2022)

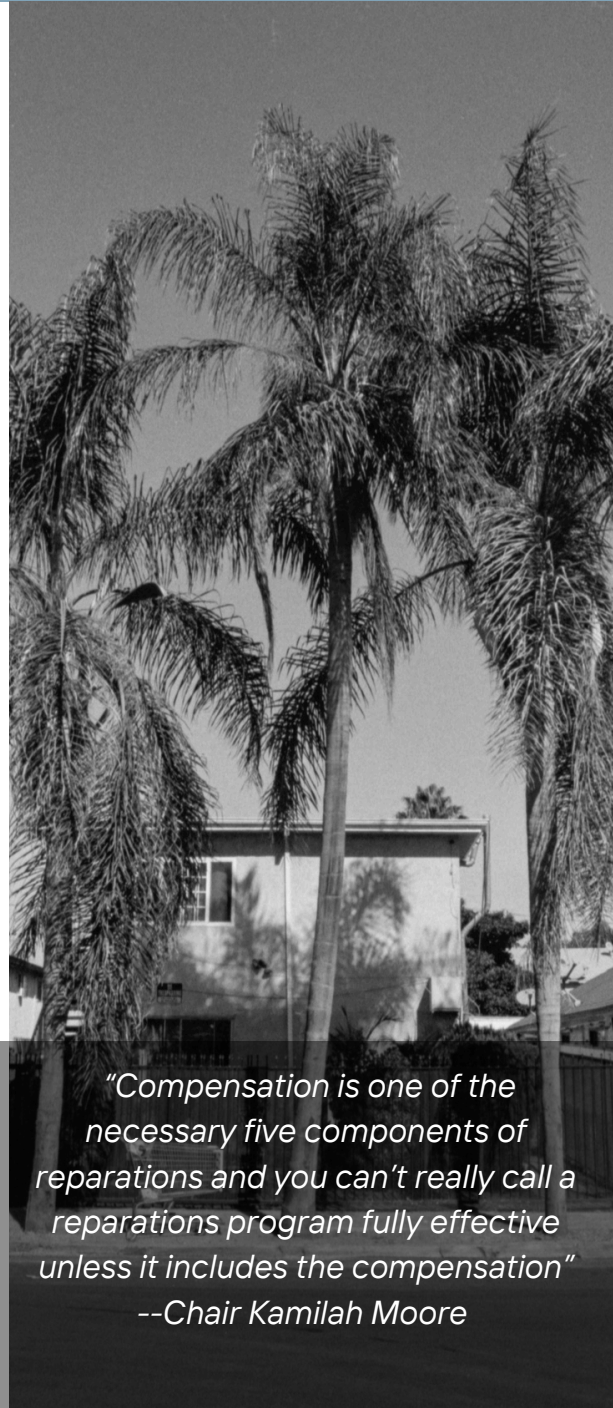
**Asheville & Buncombe County**, North Carolina  
total population: 273,589  
Buncombe Black population: 15,594  
(Buncombe County Government, 2024)

**Evanston, Illinois** total population: 75,544  
Evanston Black population: 12,756  
(US Census, 2022)

**Denver, Colorado** total population: 713,252  
Denver Black population: 63,002  
(US Census, 2022)

With one of California's largest Black populations, historically Black neighborhoods in South LA continue to receive disproportionately low amounts of public funding:

*Three South LA city council districts have 20% of the city's population...[but] received just 13% of the targeted allocation for public services, 12% of funds for economic development, and 15% for neighborhood improvements from FY 13-14 to FY 17-18"*  
(Muraida, L. & Wat, E., 2020: 58).



*"Compensation is one of the necessary five components of reparations and you can't really call a reparations program fully effective unless it includes the compensation"*  
--Chair Kamilah Moore

SOURCE: DR. SEAN ANGST, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA FULLERTON, 2019

# THE LOS ANGELES CONTEXT

## Map of the greater LA Area

*"The drivers for such sprawling fragmentation, the ways in which it has consistently worked to support the wealth of all-white neighborhoods, and the widespread support for it from residents and planners alike, demand a hard look at how race and capital have intertwined" (Gibbons, 2018: 3)*



Source: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2022

## DATA: LEVERAGING *WITHIN*-CASE STRATEGY

The context and purpose of these projects all constitute different case studies. Through an open-ended, inductive inquiry, hypotheses were constantly generated and rejected as new questions were discovered during data collection and analysis. In order to identify common themes and differences among the cases, MA used what Gerring (2004) describes as “within-case strategy,” which blurs the normative boundary between single and multiple case research. **This report operationalizes this methodology by focusing on a single unit (i.e., reparations programs) but uses multiple cases that were then thematically subdivided and coded through a content analysis.**

Using historical research and contemporary interviews, this within-case study inquiry results from the triangulation of multiple sources of evidence, building from the prior development of theories that guided the collection and analysis. Such depth, detail and richness helped verify the data as it provided a test for developing, critiquing, and supporting interpretations (Maxwell, 2004). A main goal of case study research is “to identify the necessary circumstances under which typical constraints can be prevailed over” (Mukhija, 2010: 418).

Mockingbird Analytics contacted 36 key stakeholders based on preliminary research, recommendations from the City of Los Angeles’ Reparations Commission, and through a mechanism of chain referrals using snowball sampling. **The data come from 18 semi-structured interviews that were completed from August 2023 to April 2024. This robust, empirical sample reached saturation based on the defined objectives, (Hennink & Kaiser, 2022).** The final 18 participants worked across industries, regions, and scales of repair work, representing cities, business, and non-profit sectors that have contributed to a reparations project at the local, state, and/or national level. Places represented include Minneapolis, Minnesota; Evanston, Illinois; Denver, Colorado; Cambridge, Massachusetts; Asheville and Buncombe County, North Carolina; and, leaders across California.

Though participants represent a range of scales and sectors at which reparations programs may be organized (i.e., city, county, state, and federal), MA analyzed the findings based on the city scale in order to be most applicable to the City of Los Angeles context. Further research is needed to examine the findings for other scales and sectors interested in funding reparations program. Another limitation in this analysis is the lack of representation among groups specifically serving Black 2SLGBTQ+ people, Black people with disabilities, and low-income Black people in Los Angeles.

## METHODOLOGY: NARRATIVE INQUIRY

Using a Narrative Inquiry approach, an interview protocol was created based on the exploration of the established research questions (Hunter, 2012). The purpose of the interviews were to build relationships and rapport so that those leaders involved in this work understand that there is strong momentum to expand the work they have started. A Narrative Inquiry approach involved asking participants about their roles, experiences, and recommendations regarding the fiscal elements of reparations work. For instance, questions included:

- Did you collaborate with local institutions or organizations during your reparations work?
- What were some of the sources of funding or revenue you utilized to fund your program? Or, what anticipated sources of funding are you currently considering?
- Have you considered other programs such as housing or social services as a contribution to your reparations plans?

Interviews lasted approximately one hour. General themes were addressed to identify their role within the reparations case being studied, any challenges and/or successes to funding reparations, and recommendations for a jurisdiction considering a reparations pilot program. Probes were used to encouraged discussion on the funding elements of the case. The protocol offered both consistency across themes discussed in every interview, as well as flexibility of responses by each participant based on their unique context and role. This approach allowed a narrative to emerge based on the participants' perspectives.

Nine of the 18 participants identify as women and seven as men. They range in age from late 20s to late 70s. Fifteen of the participants identify as Black/African-American or a person of color. Of the participants, two from Legal and/or legislative, four from policy and advocacy, five from Philanthropy, five from municipal initiatives, three from education, and one from consulting & development. It should be noted that many participants work across sectors in some capacity. For instance, Dr. Dwight Mullens is both the Chair of the Asheville/Buncombe Reparations Commission and also emeritus faculty at the University of North Carolina.

MA applied qualitative codes to interview transcripts in two waves. In the initial wave, transcripts were coded for two parts of the reparations process:

1. Pre-implementation themes: key challenges and successes for a reparations program prior to any payments being disbursed or programs launched
2. Post-implementation themes: key challenges and successes for a reparations program during and after any payment is disbursed

Once interview excerpts were coded into these categories, MA used a grounded theory approach to identify emerging themes within each group (Charmaz, 2014). **This report presents sub-themes (e.g. funding streams, building consensus, and fund-management intermediary) that emerged within the pre-implementation category by highlighting the subset of individual cases.**





SOURCE: DR. SEAN ANGST, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA FULLERTON, 2019

## WHO ARE THE EXPERTS?

Interview participants were prioritized based on:

1. Contributions to and controversies with possible funding models;
2. Understanding of the philanthropic and public sector funding landscapes; and,
3. Perspectives on drivers and challenges associated with implementation.

The final list of experts include:

1. **Chair Kamilah Moore:** CA Reparations Task Force (AB3121)
2. **Devine Prince:** US Freedmen Project
3. **Annette Wilcox:** US Freedmen Project
4. **Jackie Statum Allen:** Bush Foundation
5. **Danielle Mkali:** Nexus Community Partners
6. **Vikas Maturi:** Liberation Ventures
7. **Amber Banks:** Decolonizing Wealth
8. **Rayshauna Gray:** Harvard University Reparations Fund
9. **Mayor Daniel Bliss:** Evanston, IL Reparations Committee
10. **Robin Rue Simmons:** Founder and Executive Director of
11. **Sol Anderson:** President and CEO of the Evanston Community Foundation
12. **Nicholas Cummings:** Evanston Reparations Attorney
13. **Lottie Dula:** Denver Reparations Fund; Reparations 4 Slavery
14. **Bobbie Alexander:** Denver Black Reparations Council; Denver Mayor's Office for Social Equity and Innovation
15. **Chair Dr. Dwight Mullens:** Asheville/Buncombe County Reparations Commission; UNC faculty emeritus
16. **Jessica Calderon:** Denver Reparations Fund
17. **Dr. Michael Stoll:** CA Reparations (AB3121); UCLA faculty
18. **David Gardinier:** The Fund For Reparations NOW! founding member

# REPARATIONS FRAMEWORKS

Historically, the calculation of reparations for harmed communities varies based on the specific background, legal framework, and political considerations. There is no one-size-fits-all formula for determining the amount of reparations, as it depends on the nature and extent of historical injustices, the scale of harm inflicted, and the resources available for restitution. In 2005, **The United Nations** developed guiding principles for calculating reparations “to promote justice by redressing gross violations of international human rights law or serious violations of international humanitarian law” (147):

1. **Restitution** should restore the victim to the original situation prior to the occurrence of gross violations, including liberty, human rights, citizenship, residence, property;
2. **Compensation** should be provided for damage proportional to the gravity of the violation for losses suffered, such as physical or mental harm, moral damage, lost employment or educational opportunities, lost wages;
3. **Rehabilitation** for endured suffering, including mental, physical, and legal care;
4. **Satisfaction** may include measures to stop continued harm, verification of no further violations to the safety of the victims or the communities that support them, official statement or judicial decision restoring the dignity and rights of the victim, public apologies and acceptance of responsibility, commemorations to the victims, judicial and administrative sanctions against liable parties, and an accurate accounting of violations occurred in educational materials at all levels and sectors;
5. **Guarantees of non-repetition** may include, where applicable, legal reform, education and training, and professional protections for human rights defenders.

Reparations programs specific to Black Communities across the U.S. often use the model developed by the **National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC)** in 2015. Inspired by the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) Reparations Commission, the NAARC 10-Point Reparations program is a platform to guide and deepen the movement for Reparations for people of African descent across the U.S:

1. **A formal apology** by the President and ratified by the U.S. Congress, as well as the establishment of an African Holocaust (Maafa) Institute to provide education;
2. **The right of repatriation** to an African nation of their choice and the creation of an African Knowledge Program to bridge barriers and heal wounds between Africans in the U.S. and Africans on the continent;
3. **The right to land for social and economic development** to remedy former enslaved Africans’ exclusion from government programs throughout history;
4. **Funds for cooperative enterprises and socially responsible entrepreneurial development** to sustain Black businesses and Black economic infrastructure for the benefit of Black America;
5. **Resources for the health, wellness, and healing of Black families and communities** from the damages of Post Traumatic Slavery Syndrome;
6. **Education for community development and empowerment;**
7. **Affordable housing for healthy Black communities and wealth generation;**
8. **Strengthening Black America’s information and communications infrastructure;**
9. **Preserving Black sacred sites and monuments;**
10. **Repairing the damages of the “criminal injustice system.”**



Source: Eliot Elisofon / The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images

# HISTORICAL REPARATIONS: JAPANESE INTERNMENT REPARATIONS

In the context for reparations, two cases that are foundational to historical reparations. MA examined (1) compensation for Japanese-Americans to address harms during internment and (2) reparations and restitution for Holocaust survivors and Jewish victims. These distinct cases set the course for international reparations work. They demonstrate different scales of retribution and reparations, as well as the public discourse that surfaced in reaction to the cases. The two cases used the United Nations reparations framework to implement the national programs.

**Context of Harm.** In 1942, President Franklin Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, authorizing the forced removal of any person deemed a threat to national security from the West Coast to detention camps further inland. This resulted in the incarceration, or internment, of 120,000 innocent civilian Japanese-Americans in isolated camps until 1946, constituting a grave violation of their civil liberties and constitutional rights (National Archives, 2022).

**Movement History.** In 1970, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) began advocating for legislation to repair the harm caused to those incarcerated during the war. By the early 1980s, hundreds of survivors and

their families testified at federal commission hearings, building a multi-racial movement. In 1983, lawyers uncovered documents proving government lies and suppression of evidence regarding Japanese Americans' supposed military threat. (Kandil, 2023).

**Reparations Won.** President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which:

1. Formally apologized for violating civil liberties and constitutional rights;
2. Created a small fund to pay for (i) public education efforts regarding the history of Japanese incarceration and (ii) \$20,000 redress payments to living survivors.

**Fiscal Administration.** The Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act of July 2, 1948 provided compensation to Japanese-Americans for the losses of property from their forced removal during World War II. The Office of Redress Administration (ORA) was established in the Civil Rights Division by Section 105 of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. ORA acknowledged, apologized, and made restitution for injustices during internment. ORA identified, located, and authorized tax-free restitution payments to about 82,219 living Japanese-Americans survivors, totaling more than \$1.6 billion. If the survivor was deceased, then an immediate family heir received the payment. (The National Archives, 2024).



Source: Library of Congress

# HISTORICAL REPARATIONS: JAPANESE INTERNMENT REPARATIONS

The successful case for Japanese internment reparations reflects the possibilities for success among Black and African-American reparations movements today. Dr. Howard-Hassman wrote an article comparing reparations to Japanese-Americans and African-Americans in which she argues that, even though the movement for Japanese-American reparations took forty years, the following conditions make it easier to obtain reparations:

- "The number of victims is relatively small.
- The victims are easily identifiable.
- Many direct victims are still alive.
- The injustice took place during a relatively short time period.
- The perpetrator is known.
- The injustice is easily identifiable.
- The injustice offends values of equality, personal safety and/or the right to own property.
- The amount of reparations requested is not large enough that the public finds it unreasonable."

Enslaved African-Americans and their descendants endured incomparably more severe injustices than Japanese-Americans. Not only were African-Americans not permitted to own property, they were the legal property of others. Though slavery was abolished in

1865, more injustices were committed during Jim Crow and beyond. While identifying the perpetrators of these injustices might be easy, there are so many that it makes paying reparations difficult. (Howard-Hassman, 2019).

Given these conditions, when the City does consider a monetary reparations payment to eligible Black residents, they should consider that this case breaks down to \$6,666 per year of internment. This rate does not even begin to account for the differential impacts of slavery, compared to internment. San Francisco's African American Reparations Advisory Committee, on the other hand, proposed a \$5 million lump-sum to every eligible Black adults, with an annual guaranteed income of \$100,000. While this amount is more closely proportional with the gravity of centuries-long harm suffered, the proposal did not move forward.

The movement for Japanese-American reparations took forty years of advocacy. Because of this case study, the City might consider what kinds of long-term, movement-building strategies could build this case for reparations. With a long history of organizing among Black and Japanese residents (Kurashige, 2008), how might reparations for Black Angelenos be an impetus for solidarity work with multiracial groups?



# HISTORICAL REPARATIONS: HOLOCAUST REPARATIONS

**Context of Harm.** From approximately 1933 to 1945, Jews across Europe were rounded up and incarcerated in forced labor camps. Germany's Nazi regime and its allies killed approximately six million Jews during the Holocaust. (Holocaust Encyclopedia).

**Movement for Reparations.** Three months after the end of World War II, Chaim Weizmann, on behalf of the Jewish Agency, demanded reparations from Germany for the "mass murder, human suffering, annihilation of spiritual, intellectual, and creative forces, which are without parallel in the history of mankind" (Jewish Virtual Library). Reparations to Holocaust survivors were funded through various mechanisms, including international agreements, German government funds, and restitution payments from private companies. Exact amounts paid in reparations are estimated to be in the billions of dollars but finding an exact number is difficult, given the complexity and evolution of restitution efforts (U.S. Department of State).

Beginning with negotiations between the State of Israel and West Germany in the early 1950s, the Luxembourg Agreement was signed in 1952 and laid the foundation for reparations payments to the State of Israel and Jewish survivors. Though reparations were widely unpopular in West Germans and Israel, key elements for reparations include:

1. Acceptance of responsibility from the German government for the crimes of the Nazi regime committed against Jews;
2. Compensation from West Germany to the State of Israel for the 500,000 Holocaust survivors who resettled there, amounting to \$714 million in goods and services. (U.S. Department of State).

Another \$100 million was earmarked to establish The Claims Conference, an international group representing Holocaust survivors in compensation negotiations. The Claims Conference also facilitates the redistribution of many funds to Holocaust survivors for medical and home care, as well as education and memorial projects.

In 1988, the German government allocated another \$125 million for reparations such that Holocaust survivors would receive monthly pensions of \$290 for the remainder of their lives. **By 1999, survivors had filed so many class action lawsuits in American courts that the German government and German industries (e.g. Volkswagen, Siemens) agreed to compensate Jews and non-Jews for slave and forced labor performed for German industries during the war.** In 2000 The Claims Conference Program for Former Slave and Forced Laborers was established with more than \$21 million from the German Foundation (EVZ) and \$1.25 billion from a



Source: Markus Schreiber/AP

# HISTORICAL HARMS: HOLOCAUST REPARATIONS

settlement reached in a U.S. District Court of New York. **Lump sum payments from the Foundation in the amount of \$2,500 to \$7,500 went to Jewish survivors, certain heirs, and non-Jewish slave and forced laborers. German industries agreed to program because they were guaranteed dismissal of any future lawsuits and further litigation.** (American Jewish Historical Society, 2007).

Other countries also contributed toward Holocaust reparations. For instance, the Swiss Banks Settlement provided \$1.25 billion to compensate Holocaust survivors and their heirs whose assets were hoarded during and after WWII (ICE, 2001). The Obama administration negotiated reparations from the French government for deporting Jewish residents to death camps on state-owned trains (Eizenstat, 2019). **In 2013, the United States Department of Health and Human Services initiated a \$12 million allocation,** to be dispersed over five years, to the Jewish Federations of North America. Given 130,000 Holocaust survivors reside in the United State and one-quarter live below the poverty line, then-Vice President Joe Biden launched the initiative to address the needs of survivors. These efforts were matched with private funds that supported programming for organizations working with Holocaust survivors. Advocacy efforts for Biden to launch this program involved direct communication (e.g. sending emails and making phone calls), lobbying and meetings with Biden or his staff, public awareness through events and education to build public support, media outreach, and coalition building (Jewish Telegraph Agency and the U.S. House of Representatives News).

By 2020, the German government had paid an estimated \$70 billion to survivors and programs supporting survivors. The successes of this program were its substantial financial support as well as the acknowledgement of historical responsibility and the symbolic significance of the agreement.

**Eligibility.** Depending on the program, eligibility criteria may vary. Generally, a person must have:

1. Been held prisoner in a concentration camp, ghetto, or similar detention facility associated with forced labor; or,
2. Been abducted from their home country into the German Reich or German-occupied territory and subjected to forced labor under detention, or conditions similar to detention that are comparable to "extremely bad living conditions." (Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft).

Similar to Japanese internment, reparations are easier to obtain when the event occurred within living historical memory. Reparations were granted for survivors of the Holocaust, not the centuries of pogroms, state-sanctioned mass murders of Jews during the 19th and 20th centuries. What crimes against a limited number of Black victims did the City of LA commit during recent history, over a short time period? What is a reasonable monetary amount to begin setting a precedent for reparations? Given the role of courts in pressuring governments and private companies to compensate Holocaust survivors, this raises questions for how courts and lawsuits might be leveraged to advocate for Black reparations. Did Holocaust lawsuits set a precedent for companies to be accountable if they profited from Black labor?

# CONTEMPORARY REPARATIONS CASE STUDIES

Mockingbird Analytics examined three contemporary reparations case studies:

1. Asheville, NC & Buncombe County
2. Evanston, IL
3. Denver, CO

Each of these cases are at different stages in their reparations programs. The analysis begins with the Asheville, NC and Buncombe County program because the timing and complexity of their process aligns most closely with the Los Angeles Reparations Program.

## Asheville, North Carolina & Buncombe County:

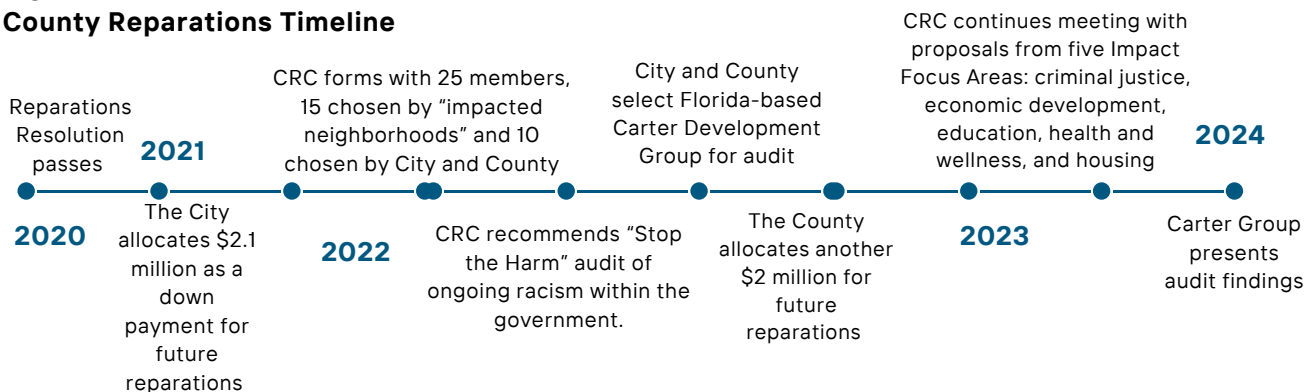
In 2020, the Racial Justice Coalition (RJC), an alliance of individuals and organizations addressing systemic racism and state-sanctioned violence against Black people through grassroots organizing, pressured the City of Asheville and Buncombe County to begin a local reparations process. Both the City and County passed Reparations Resolutions, which committed to establishing a process within the next year to develop

recommendations that create generational wealth and boost economic mobility for the Black community (Figure 1).

In 2021, the initial reparations fund came from the City Council voting to appropriate \$2.1 million from the sale of City-owned lands to fund reparations. The land was acquired in the 1970s through Urban Renewal efforts. The County then match the funds with an additional \$2 million. Both the City and County also committed to \$500,000 per year from the general fund.

In 2022, the Community Reparations Commission (CRC) was formed. **The annual budget line came after the Reparations Commission requested “that the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners include a line item in their budget for reparations for Black people in Buncombe County as a percentage of the overall budget in perpetuity.”** That fund has been set aside to implement based on recommendations from the CRC. CRC Chair Dr. Mullen explained,

**Figure 1. Asheville & Buncombe County Reparations Timeline**



# CONTEMPORARY REPARATIONS CASE STUDIES

**“We’re developing the language as we go. Whether it makes sense elsewhere, it makes sense here in Asheville.”**

The CRC is developing a framework that prioritizes community benefits (e.g. forming community health workers) over individual benefits (e.g. disbursing checks to individuals). Currently, the CRC is waiting to receive feedback from the community for this plan. Their main ally in the work is mobilizing the support of local HBCUs as well as faith-based communities (i.e. Black churches and Jewish synagogues).

The CRC hired a third-party auditor to look at City and County documents to identify racial and gender disparities in five policy areas: education, courts, police, housing and gentrification, and and healthcare justice. They found systemic disparities in the different offices and processes. For instance, after finding an absence of Black businesses in Asheville, they proposed forming a Black Chamber of Commerce as a major economic

## Non-Government Organizations Involved

The Reparations Stakeholder Authority of Asheville (RSAA) was created by community activists who lead the RJC (Figure 2). RSAA is set up to receive, administer, and distribute the public and private funding for Black reparations. Tzedek Social Justice Fund is the incubator and fiscal sponsor for RSAA at no cost to RSAA and provided the initial \$100,000 donation to support hiring a full-time staff member to transition RSAA into an independent, Black-led organization. Though many Reparations Commissioners are connected with RJC leadership, no formal alignment exists between RSAA and the City or County. RSAA is set up to receive both public tax revenue streams and private donations, which will be important as leaders anticipate public funding cuts. RSAA has already raised \$400,000 in community funds.

Because of deep trust between the CRC and RSAA, the CRC has been pushing to move all City and County reparations funds to the RSAA for holding until any disbursement decisions are made. The City and County officials, however, continue to resist these efforts.

**Figure 2. Asheville & Buncombe County Reparations Stakeholder Map**





# CONTEMPORARY REPARATIONS CASE STUDIES

## **Evanston, Illinois:**

In June 2019, the City of Evanston began its four-year reparations process following the City Council's adoption of Resolution 58-R-19, A Commitment to End Structural Racism and Achieve Racial Equity. The following month, the City Council's Equity and Empowerment Commission held two community meetings to gather public input on reparations, which was synthesized in a report for City Council. In November, 2020, City Council codified a Reparations Committee, appointed by the Mayor. The Committee began developing a reparations program based on the NAARC model.

### **In 2021, the City passed the Restorative Housing Program, which allocates \$10 million over 10 years toward eligible residents for payments of \$25,000.**

Commissioners identified harm through redlining policies, which developed a fiscal precedent in their program design. The Reparations Committee determined that residents and direct descendants of residents affected by local housing discrimination between 1919 and 1969 are eligible to receive payments. The City has funding to support the first 80 residents, though 454 direct descendants have been verified as eligible. They have dispersed \$3 million in direct benefits. Fund has accumulated to \$20 million today. The funding set standard for disbursement without legislative pushback. (Daily Northwestern, 2024)

Initially, reparations money could only be applied toward housing-related projects (e.g. ownership, home improvement, and mortgage



Source: Shafkat Anwar/AP

assistance). In March, Evanston's City Council added the option of direct cash payments because some residents felt a restricted grant was demeaning. Evanston reparations leaders were quick to refer to explain that **Evanston's reparations program is "an outlier, not the norm."**

The funding stream was initially just through the recreational cannabis tax, but it was not accumulating fast enough so they added a graduate real estate transfer tax, or sales tax charged by the local government, on properties over \$1 million. Reparations Commission leaders also started the Reparations Stakeholders Authority of Evanston (RSAE), a 501(c)3 that is housed at the Evanston Community Foundation (ECF) and mainly made consists of faith-based leaders. RSAE meets monthly with ECF, partnering to raise funds to hire staff and supplement the public revenue streams. ECF and RSAE have been instrumental partners, contributing through advocacy or infrastructure.

# CONTEMPORARY REPARATIONS CASE STUDIES

## Denver, Colorado:

Denver uses a non-profit approach that is not based on the NAARC model. In 2019, the Reparations Circle Denver and the Denver Black Reparations Council were conceptualized in collaboration with the Denver Foundation. In 2020, the Denver Black Reparations Council was established and incorporated the following year. By 2022, the Denver Black Reparations Council issued its first local repair grants, with two more rounds of grants in 2023. **In the first round of funding, the Denver Black Reparations Council distributed \$50,000 with individual grants ranging between \$6,500 and \$7,500.** Over \$800,000 was raised during these initial years. The leaders, Lottie Dula and Bobbie Alexander, noted that they only formed a Black council once they began receiving donor commitments. The Denver Black Reparations Council maintains, manages, and disburses reparative grants from two funds:

1. Its own sources and
2. Housed in the Denver Foundation, which is raised by the Reparations Circle of Denver.

The Denver Foundation demonstrated incredible flexibility in terms of how the money would be disbursed to the community. They went through “a grueling process to weed out white supremacy in their grant requirements.” **They had a two-year process to simplify the grant application process. Now, most grants are unrestricted and have no reporting requirements.** The leaders of the Reparations Council and the Reparations Circle are both deeply involved in education and narrative-shifting work, as well. The education has been particularly effective in developing a

transparent process and engaging white donors. The Denver Foundation vets the applications to ensure they all comply with 501(c)3 law and state law. The Reparations Council then uses their portal to vote on who received the grants. Most donors are over the age of 65 so there are concerns with sustainability of the funding sources as people continue to age.

## Key stakeholders:

- Denver Black Reparations Council: manages and disperses funds raised by Reparations Circle Denver to the Black community;
- Reparations Circle Denver: maintains two funds that are managed by the Denver Black Reparations Council. They also provide educational learning tools and support for white people interested in local repair work;
- The Denver Foundation: houses monies that are granted to Black-led and Black-serving 501(c)3s to benefit the Black community in Colorado. They actively collaborate with the Denver Black Reparations Council and Reparations Circle Denver to process donations made to the fund.

Though Denver reparations leaders, such as Bobbie Alexander, work with both the Denver Black Reparations Council and the Denver Mayor’s Office, the reparations efforts largely reside outside the scope of the municipality. **This raises questions for how LA might leverage nongovernmental groups that are already actively raising reparations funds locally, such as Fund Reparations NOW!.**

## KEY FINDINGS: THERE IS NO *RIGHT* WAY TO DO REPARATIONS IN LOS ANGELES

The data revealed key barriers and successes that the LA City Reparations Advisory Commission (RAC) should consider prior to deciding the form of reparations. The data suggests three main challenges across cases:

**Leadership shifts:** The data show that city and philanthropic leadership was a key concern with the sustainability of funding streams. Asheville worries that more conservative elected officials will slash the ongoing reparations funding agreement. Similarly, local philanthropists' motivation for participating in reparations work was largely dependent on the interests of their organizational leadership.

**Transparency as kindness:** It will be critical for leadership and key stakeholders to be transparent throughout the entire process in order to mitigate causing additional harms to Black residents. The Bush Foundation and Nexus Community Partners are leading local repair work in St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota. With \$50 million in unrestricted funds to allocate, some Black residents assumed they were eligible to receive a \$50,000 sum. Only after they submitted their application did they find out that they did not qualify based on the criteria. Education will be an important mechanism for developing this transparency.

**Reparations Advisory Commission and community organizing:** The data revealed how Reparations Commissions play a uniquely critical role in identifying and developing allies that were key to sustained political will. The RAC can be instrumental in providing the education and outreach necessary for building a robust reparations movement to shift the narrative and gain support. For instance, **Evanston's commissioners mobilized faith-based leaders and created the RSAE that also raised private funds to supplement public revenue. Similarly, Asheville, NC commissioners are mobilizing the support of faith-based communities and local HBCUs.** Through these outreach and education efforts, the RAC can build consensus and collective capacity. The RAC can also influence policymakers by building a cohesive movement and robust coalition dedicated to implementing a reparations program for the City of Los Angeles.

Though there is no right way to implement a reparations program in the City of Los Angeles, NAARC's model is a fruitful foundation that can then be tailored to the unique history and context of Los Angeles.



SOURCE: DR. SEAN ANGST, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA FULLERTON, 2019



SOURCE: MONICA ALMEIDA/THE NEW YORK TIMES

## KEY FUNDING CONTROVERSIES

Data suggest two controversial questions that participants grappled with as they determined funding approaches and models.

### **Which funding streams should be used?**

When considering public revenue streams for a reparations fund, data from legal experts suggest the use of self-administered local taxes as the safest way to use public funds because state and federal laws might impose greater restrictions. Asheville and Buncombe County have allocated funds from selling public property and adding line items in their general funds. Evanston earmarked cannabis and property sales tax as their main revenue streams.

As the City of Los Angeles' Reparations Advisory Commissioners consider recommendations for private or public funding of reparations, the data reveal less consensus. A few participants strongly urged municipalities to allocate most of the funding for a local reparations program, ensuring that philanthropic entities are not the primary source of funding. For instance, a participant from the philanthropic sector explained that while a call to philanthropy is a good idea in theory, "to adhere to the law and spirit of reparations, the city needs to fund it on their own." A California Task Force member worried that some philanthropic organizations may not have the transparency needed to support reparations.

Yet, private funders have more flexibility than public funders. In one local repair program funded by \$50 million from the Bush Foundation, Danielle Mkali and her team at Nexus Community Partners were hired with a year-long grant of \$500,000 to build the infrastructure for engagement, design custom a grant-making system in Salesforce, and develop and RFP for an advisory committee and evaluation partner. The rest of the \$50 million fund is being distributed to Black residents in St. Paul and Minneapolis. Mkali explained, "if there's consensus on dollar investment, take funds from anyone ready to release them. All cities and foundations have a debt to pay." Mkali's view reflects the Holocaust reparations programs, which targeted both governmental bodies and private companies for restitution payments.

### **What amount should be paid?**

There was no consensus on exact amounts paid. As Mkali and her team determined the "right amount" to fund for individual recipients, they asked: what amount feels transformative to an individual? What could fund a dignified down payment on a house or pay a substantial portion of tuition? They decided on \$50,000. Evanston, however, decided on \$25,000. Denver's grants go directly to 501(c)3s and do not exceed \$7,500. Asheville and Buncombe County are prioritizing community benefits, such as the formation of a community health program.



# LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS: FINDING AN ALIGNED INTERMEDIARY

Based on the data that Mockingbird Analytics has collected, both historic and contemporary reparations programs required an intermediary group, such as the Evanston Community Foundation, the Office of Redress Administration (ORA), or the Claims Conference. This group is largely responsible for managing the funds. **The City of LA must identify allies to collaborate for the success of any reparations pilot program.** In particular, a dedicated fund-management entity, such as a department or philanthropic organization, would provide beneficial administrative support. In the case of Japanese American internment reparations, the ORA identified, located and authorized restitution payments. Informally, Evanston's library system supported the applications process by facilitating sessions with seniors to enhance their understanding of the qualifications and submission process. Formally, the Evanston Community Foundation holds and manages the Evanston Reparations Community Fund no fees to allow for more flexibility and sustainability in the process. They also support the RSAE in raising funds, developing processes, and distributing funds as directed by the RSAE to advance Evanston reparations.

MA researchers have conducted a landscape analysis to identify possible intermediaries with whom the City might align for administrative support. An extended list of possible intermediaries will be developed for the Commission. Based on the data, **this intermediary must fulfill two key criteria: (1) values-alignment and (2) capacity.**

The values for this intermediary must align with the ethos of reparations, which, according to our data, entails:

- Rooting the process in **Black autonomy, power, and self-determination**: in Denver, Asheville, and Evanston, the intermediary deferred to a Black-led advisory board or nonprofit leadership throughout the pre- and post-program implementation process. This was also the case with the Bush Foundation's \$50 million local repair projects throughout the Minnesota. As one participant explained, control is a form of colonization so "communities and their organizations need maximum flexibility to do what they need to do." This deference necessitates **trust and flexibility in how the money is given to the community.**
- **Transparency** with both a Black-led advisory committee or nonprofit as well as with the public.

The City will need to find an intermediary that also has sufficient **capacity** to:

- House the funds at such a large scale
- Run compliance measures (e.g. audits, new contracts) required for a large-scale, publicly-funded project

In the landscape analysis of possible intermediaries, Community Partners (CP) was most aligned in values and capacity. As a 501(c)3, CP partners with governments to support equity-building efforts through design, grant management, curriculum development and gatherings. Led by women of color, CP Vice President Phyllis Owens

# LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS: FINDING AN ALIGNED INTERMEDIARY

explained her excitement for reparations work: “we like building things from the ground up. This is the kind of work we want to do--transforming systems.”

Different kinds of intermediary organizations will offer different levels of support and infrastructure. Some, like the Denver Foundation, can only fund 501(c)3s, not individuals. **The large scale of the City of LA’s reparations program would likely be incomparable to that of Evanston. As such, the RAC may require multiple fiscal intermediaries to collaborate in support of the program.** Though the City might find a family foundation that waives its fees to align with a reparations project, such a small organization might also struggle to meet the needs of a project this large. On the other hand, organizations that already have the infrastructure might charge a higher fee (8-16%) to offer robust supports.

Finding an intermediary should be part of RAC’s broader effort to build a coalition dedicated to advocating for and implementing a reparations program for Black Angelenos. By pooling resources and expertise, a coalition with a designated stakeholder authority and fiscal sponsor could amplify reparations efforts and increase the pressure on policymakers.

*“Some philanthropic organizations may not have the transparency needed to support such work in reparations. ...It sets a bad precedent for places outside of California that won’t have access to funding in the same way LA might.”*

*--Chair Kamilah Moore*



SOURCE: DR. SEAN ANGST, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA FULLERTON, 2019

## KEY TAKEAWAYS: MUNICIPAL MOBILIZATION & BLACK GOVERNANCE

Given the project methodology and scope, Mockingbird Analytics wants to leave the Commission with additional data and insights in the following areas:

There is **no consensus on specific models** for reparations funding. Fiscal alignment with other organizations and entities seems crucial to success. As one philanthropic participant explained, “there is no one thing that is the solution and no one way to respond. That is where agency comes in and not having things decided for the community but having the community decide for themselves.”

In some reparations and local repair programs, **unrestricted funds and non-reporting measures** was a key mechanism for building in Black agency and self-determination. Danielle Mkali explained that they do not have reporting requirement because “we want to set people up for success and not to think that if they don’t succeed then they are a failure.” Further, she recommended that any true reparations program should only require residents to sign up to receive funding, not submit an application. This seemed especially important as some people were triggered by lineage questions since they did not know where they came from so “it was messing with their minds and causing them harm.” Denver reparations leaders also noted the importance of an easy application process.

**Root the process in Black power and Black autonomy.** As Chair Dr. Mullens admonished, “Black governance is key. Who is governing

the money and who decides policy must be rooted in Black community. You’ll have mistrust from community if there is not community-based commissioners.”

**Develop trust** throughout the entire process. One Denver leader noted, “if there isn’t trust - we may be working too fast and that is an element of White supremacy.” Building a trusting relationship with any intermediary (e.g. foundation or nonprofit) requires a baseline level of trust among leaders, as was the case between the Bush Foundation and Nexus Partners, the Evanston Community Foundation and the Reparation Commissioners, as well as between the Tzedek Fund and the RSAA. California State Taskforce Chair, Kamilah Moore, also urged RAC members to build trust among one another, which might require relationship-building efforts to take place outside of official public hearings. The City of Asheville and Buncombe County, however, do not sense that same trust, leading to challenges with allocating public funds to the RSAA. But, the RSAA easily decided to house themselves within the Tzadek Fund because there was such a historical and ongoing trusting relationship between leaders. **What community-based organizations or public departments in Los Angeles does the RAC already trust? With which public officials and faith-based groups does the RAC already have a trusting relationship?** A reparations program founded on relationships of trust will be a fundamental element for the sustainability of this movement.

## WORKS CITED

Charmaz, K. (2014). Grounded theory in global perspective: Reviews by international researchers. *Qualitative inquiry*, 20(9), 1074-1084.

Cruz, E. (2024). Reparations Committee Determines Order for Reparations Distribution. *The Daily Northwestern*. Accessed at <https://dailynorthwestern.com/2024/01/11/lateststories/reparations-committee-determines-order-for-reparations-distribution/>

Eizenstat, S. (2019). *What Holocaust Restitution Taught Me About Slavery Reparations*. Politico. Accessed at <https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2019/10/27/slavery-reparations-holocaust-restitution-negotiations-229881/>

Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft Foundation. (2010). Payment Programme of the Foundation EVZ. Accessed at <https://www.bundesarchiv.de/zwangsarbeit/leistungen/direktleistungen/leistungsprogramm/index.html.en>

Gerring, J. (2004). What is a case study and what is it good for?. *American political science review*, 98(2), 341-354.

Holocaust Encyclopedia. (2024). *Introduction to the Holocaust*. Accessed at <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/en/article/introduction-to-the-holocaust>

Howard-Hassmenn, R. (2019). Why Japanese-Americans received reparations and African-Americans are still waiting. *The Conversation.com* Accessed at <https://theconversation.com/why-japanese-americans-received-reparations-and-african-americans-are-still-waiting-119580>

Hennink, M., & Kaiser, B. N. (2022). Sample sizes for saturation in qualitative research: A systematic review of empirical tests. *Social science & medicine*, 292, 114523.

Hunter, M. G. (2012). Conducting information systems research using narrative inquiry. *Information Systems Theory: Explaining and Predicting Our Digital Society*, Vol. 2, 349-365. Chicago

Jewish Virtual Library. (2018). *Holocaust Restitution: German Holocaust Reparations*. Accessed at <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/german-holocaust-reparations>

Kandil, C. Y. (2023). Think reparations are impossible? The story of Japanese Americans proves otherwise. *The Guardian*. Accessed from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/sep/04/japanese-americans-incarceration-reparations-slavery>

Maxwell, J. A. (2004). Causal explanation, qualitative research, and scientific inquiry in education. *Educational researcher*, 33(2), 3-11.

Mukhija, V. (2010). N of one plus some: An alternative strategy for conducting single case research. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 29(4), 416-426.

Muraida, L. & Wat, E. (2020). *South Central Rooted. Building Healthy Communities South Los Angeles*

National African-American Reparations Commission. (2024). *Reparations Plan*. Accessed at <https://reparationscomm.org/reparations-plan/>

National Archives. (2022). Executive Order 9066: Resulting in Japanese-American Incarceration (1942). Accessed at <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/executive-order-9066>

National Archives. (2024). Search the Compensation and Reparations for the Evacuation, Relocation, and Internment Index (Redress Case Files). Accessed at <https://www.archives.gov/research/japanese-americans/redress>

United Nations. (2005). *Principles and Guidelines for a Comprehensive Programme of Reparations for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law*. Accessed at [https://www.ohchr.org/documents/publications/rep\\_gtz\\_05\\_en.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/documents/publications/rep_gtz_05_en.pdf)

U.S. Department of State. *Just Act Report*. Accessed at <https://www.state.gov/reports/just-act-report-to-congress/germany/>

This report was also made possible by the diligent work of Mockingbird's research associates and independent scholars: Ms. Ejiro Morrow, Dr. Robert Garcia, and Mr. Hisham Ali Bob



