

**DRAFT**

## **Reparations Commission**

### **SUMMARY/ACTION MINUTES**

Wednesday, October 9, 2024

6:00 p.m.

**Location:** Alameda County Training & Education Center  
Oakland Room  
125 – 12<sup>th</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Oakland, CA 94607

#### **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by the Vice Chair, Lori Cox at 6:00 p.m.

#### **II. Roll Call**

**Members present:**

1. Leo Bazile
2. Lori Cox
3. Alan Dones
4. Phillip S. Gardiner
5. James Knowles
6. Larry McClendon
7. Brandon T. Sass
8. Shadrick Small

**Excused:** Artavia Berry, Jesse Burleson, Debra Gore-Mann, Shenita Hurskin, Carolyn Johnson, Vickie Stephens, Natasha Tripplett

#### **III. Public Comment (items not listed on the agenda)**

None.

#### **IV. Approval of Minutes – Action Item**

A motion was made by Commissioner McClendon and seconded by Commissioner Sass, to approve the minutes of September 26, 2024, as submitted.

**Ayes:** Bazile, Cox, Dones, Gardiner, Knowles, McClendon, Sass, Small

**Noes:**

**Excused:** Berry, Burleson, Gore, Hurskin, Johnson, Stephens, Tripplett

**Motion passed 8/0**

#### **V. Presentation: Alameda County 10-Year Housing Plan – Informational Item**

[Attachment](#)

Michelle Starratt: Alameda County Housing Director, Housing & Community Development, presented a PowerPoint presentation on the County's 10 Year Housing Plan.

The housing crisis has had a severe impact on Alameda County and nationwide. The housing crisis disproportionately affects people of color, particularly due to historical discrimination like redlining and FHA lending practices. Homelessness is often rooted in economic issues, with housing costs being the primary cause rather than mental health or substance abuse.

There is also the historical wealth gap caused by discriminatory policies and ongoing issues of poverty in urban areas, particularly among Black Americans that exacerbate the crisis.

Additionally, California's housing supply has not kept up with demand, contributing to rising costs. Building multifamily homes is often unprofitable, making it challenging to address the housing shortage. There is a need for policy and investment changes to tackle these systemic issues.

Housing costs have significantly increased over the last 50 years. In 1970, a median household in San Francisco could afford a home in 2.7 years, but by 2022, it would take 9.8 years. This trend has made homeownership, traditionally a significant way to build wealth in America, less accessible for Black and Hispanic families.

The racial wealth gap is wider now than it was in 1960, and policies have deepened this divide by limiting access to housing and wealth accumulation for people of color. Families facing obstacles like lack of education or down payment opportunities struggle to afford homes, and this issue is particularly significant for African American and Hispanic families.

The county has a 10-year plan focused on producing more housing, preserving affordable housing, and protecting residents from displacement. The plan is to:

1. Produce enough housing for residents at lower income levels which the market does not support.
2. Preserve the affordable housing that already exists.
3. Protect current residents from displacement and homelessness where neighborhoods are changing rapidly.

Federal funding for housing has decreased, and the resources available do not meet the scale of the problem. The county needs 17,000 units to address homelessness and another 37,000 units for affordable housing, but it would take decades and \$26 billion to achieve these goals. Without significant investment, the housing crisis is unlikely to improve.

Measure A1, a 2016 bond aimed at housing development, has exceeded its goal of 3,800 units by reaching about 4,400 units. Of these, over 1,200 are designated for extremely low-income individuals, formerly homeless. Solving the housing crisis requires funding from federal, state, and local levels, citing the reduction in homelessness during COVID-19 due to federal funds. Federal funding, such as VASH vouchers for veterans, has significantly reduced veteran homelessness.

The County encourages public input on the county's housing plan, which will be presented to the Board of Supervisors after the winter recess. The public comment period has been extended beyond the original 45 days and will remain open until a new Housing Summit is scheduled.

### ***Reparations Commissioners Discussion Summary***

- Impact of predatory lending practices and their long-term effects on homeownership, foreclosures, and housing insecurity.
- Relationship between early 2000s predatory lending, which led to widespread home purchases followed by a crash due to unaffordable mortgage terms,
- Crisis allowed corporations to buy foreclosed homes, creating a rental market and worsening housing insecurity. (10-year housing plan does not go into depth regarding predatory lending)
- Homeowners were often misled into pulling equity out of their homes, leading to financial distress and loss of property when they could no longer meet mortgage payments.
- Highlights how corporations buying foreclosed homes worsened housing insecurity by increasing rents.

- Homelessness and its costs to society, particularly healthcare and the criminal justice system
- Housing homeless individuals is significantly more cost-effective than the expenses incurred from healthcare and justice involvement.
- Plan could better link housing investments with broader economic benefits
- Systemic issues, including economic inequality and loan bias affecting marginalized communities, especially Black Americans.
- Plan could more explicitly address the relationship between access to capital, economic opportunity, and poverty, agreeing to explore these issues further.
- Involvement of African Americans in the housing development process, need for transparency and equity in economic opportunities, regarding affordable housing units built with public funding
- Concerns about African American companies' access to the affordable housing industry and economic participation,
- Of the 4,170 housing units that have been developed by Alameda County, non were led by African American organizations.
- Most affordable housing projects use tax credits, but developers must partner with established organizations for several projects before gaining independent access to tax credits—a barrier for newer Black developers.
- County's efforts, include launching capacity-building programs to help new developers, particularly Black churches and individuals, navigate this process and form partnerships.
- The county tracks some data related to small business involvement; they do not have specific statistics on the racial demographics of contractors but are working on gathering that information.
- Need for reform to create more equitable opportunities for Black developers

This item was informational only and required no Commission action.

## VI. Subcommittee Reports – Informational Item

All Commissioners

**Infrastructure - marketing, communication, outreach/community engagement, legal/political**  
(Leo, Jesse, Larry, Lori, Artavia, Vickie, Shad)

Nothing to report.

**Safety/criminal justice**  
(Leo, Jesse, James, Carolyn)

Commissioner Knowles attended the Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Commission meeting and reported the following:

- The Alameda County Assessment Center in Hayward is closed; a new facility in Castro Valley is awaiting fire inspection approval. In the interim, emergency foster homes will be used for housing children.
- The District Attorney, Judge Jackson, and the Public Defender reported a decrease in juvenile arrests and petition filings, attributed to schools being in session.
- New policy for juveniles, children contacted by police now have the right to consult an attorney (usually a public defender) before arrest
- Age Restrictions for Juvenile Hall children; children under 12 are no longer accepted into Juvenile Hall. Diversion programs are used for younger offenders.
- The Probation Transition Center offers services such as clothing, food, and transportation for individuals needing assistance.
- The Behavioral Health Department presented their Guidance Plan

**Economic - housing, small businesses**

(Brandon, Alan, Artavia, James)

Nothing to report.

**Health and Education**

(Natasha, James, Shadrick, Shenita, Phillip)

Commissioner Small reported that the subcommittee met briefly last week and discussed reaching out to potential partners and clarifying their research questions. They discussed enlisting support from institutions like the Goldman School of Public Policy and Northeastern at Mills College. Their focus is on identifying key areas of harm and disparities.

Commissioner Gardiner reported that as a result of his time reaching at Touro University, he may have some relevant data regarding health disparities and the impact of housing on African Americans, which includes the costs of homelessness in the county, healthcare costs for homeless individuals far higher than the cost of potential housing solutions. In addition, there are hidden costs of African American migration out of Oakland to areas like Contra Costa County, which has broader social and economic impacts.

**VII. Commissioner Outreach Form - Informational Item**

Vice Chair Cox reported on a proposed Commissioner Outreach form. Commission Chair, Debra Gore-Mann, proposed to create a Commissioner Outreach form to better coordinate among the Commissioners when attending various meetings, groups and events. The suggestion is to create an outreach form to track who is attending what, ensuring consistent messaging with talking points.

The proposal includes developing a one-page document with key talking points so that all commissioners are aligned when asked about the commission's work and priorities.

Commissioners were in support of the idea, noting that it would help with scheduling and ensuring consistent communication across events.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2024.

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