

**America's Dream Reimagined:
An Exploration of Extent of Reparations Enacted Through Reparative
Planning**

A thesis submitted by

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Abstract

This study investigates the emergent concept of reparative planning in the United States to address historical injustices faced by vulnerable communities, particularly Black Americans. Through a comprehensive literature review and five case studies—Evanston, Illinois; Asheville, North Carolina; Detroit, Michigan; Bruce’s Beach in California; and Georgetown University—this thesis evaluates the effectiveness of reparative planning initiatives using Williams and Steil’s framework and a newly developed Extent of Reparations Enacted (ERE) scale.

The research highlights the historical context of urban planning and its role in systemic racism and explores the intersection of abolitionist and racial equity planning. Using the ERE scale a speculative case study on Boston envisions inclusive reparative strategies for Black immigrant and undocumented communities.

The thesis concludes by advocating for an intersectional and comprehensive approach to reparative planning, emphasizing the need for policies that ensure long-term justice and equity. The ERE scale is presented as a practical tool for assessing and guiding these initiatives, urging planners and policymakers to recognize and rectify historical injustices for a more equitable future

*Dedicated to My Uncle Patrick "Sparks" Stewart – Reggae Musician, Rastafarian, and
Community Advocate*

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the most high, my garden on family land in Jamaica, meals made by my father, and my auntie Cherry's company.

Forgive Them Father-Ms. Lauryn Hill

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| List of Figures & Tables | vii |
| Introduction | 1 |
| Rationale and Research Questions | 4 |
| Key Terms | 5 |
| Disclaimer | 7 |
| Research Methods | 9 |
| Literature Review | 16 |
| Historical Context of The Legacy of Urban Planning and Inequity | 16 |
| Colonization and Urban Planning | 17 |
| Imperialism and Urban Planning | 18 |
| Power and Urban Planning | 20 |
| Impact of Zoning and Land Use Laws | 21 |
| The Ongoing Legacy of Redlining | 23 |
| The Hidden Toll of Urban Renewal..... | 24 |
| How Highways Shape Social Displacement | 25 |
| Gentrification: Urban Renewal in Disguise | 27 |
| Environmental Injustices..... | 28 |
| Gaps in Urban Planning Theories | 30 |
| Reparations and Decolonization in Urban Planning | 33 |
| The Emergence of Equity Planning | 35 |
| The Emergence of Abolitionist Planning | 36 |
| The Intersect of Abolitionist Planning and Equity Planning As Reparative Planning | 39 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Practice Review | 45 |
| Evanston, Illinois | 45 |
| Asheville, North Carolina | 48 |
| Detroit, Michigan | 51 |
| Bruce's Beach, California | 54 |
| Georgetown University & The Jesuits | 59 |
| Analysis of Case Studies Using Williams and Steil’s Reparative Framework ... | 63 |
| Analysis and Critique of Current Reparative Planning Cases Using Extent of Reparations Enacted (ERE) Scale | 67 |
| Purpose of Creating The Extent of Reparations Enacted (ERE) Scale | 67 |
| The Extent of Reparations Enacted (ERE) Scale | 69 |
| Critique of Case Studies Using the ERE Scale..... | 74 |
| Gap in Practice | 80 |
| Speculative Case Study on Boston Including Black Immigrants and Black Undocumented Status | 83 |
| Envisioning Reparative Interventions for Black Communities in Boston | 83 |
| Dear Honorable Mayor Michelle Wu and Boston’s Reparations Taskforce | 84 |
| Foundations of the Reparative Planning Process | 87 |
| Centering Black Bodies | 87 |
| Inclusion of Black Immigrant and Undocumented Communities | 88 |
| Protective and Preservation Approaches..... | 88 |
| Potential Outcomes | 89 |
| Sustainable Pathways of Reparations | 90 |
| Conclusion | 92 |
| Bibliography | 94 |

List of Figures & Tables

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure 1a: Venn diagram showing the intersection of Equity Planning and Abolitionist Planning being Reparative Planning. (Stewart, 2024) | 10 |
| Figure 1b. Venn diagram showing the intersection of Equity Planning and Abolitionist Planning being Reparative Planning. (Stewart, 2024) – with descriptions | 39 |
| Table 1: Reparative Framework Williams & Steil (2023) | 13 |
| Table 2. Williams and Steil’s Reparative Framework (2023) Used to Analyze Case Studies on Reparations in the United States of America..... | 64 |
| Table 3: (Extent of Reparation Enacted Table, (Stewart & Loh, 2024) | 73 |

Introduction

The American Dream, once sold, has been bought out. Its stakeholders, the benefactors of institutionalized privileges, and the rhetoric of individual mobility have proven that this dream is afforded to a specific demographic. They argue that because it worked for them, it should work for you. However, this dream must be reimagined to include its old and new stakeholders who are not favored by these institutions. As Dr. Julian Agyeman would say, "***There needs to be a paradigm shift***" -- where the power of self-determination and community preservation is placed back into the hands of the community.

In recent years, there has been a growing call for systemic change and justice, prompting a reevaluation of mainstream planning theory practices. Reparative planning aspires to be a remedy and alternative to traditional planning approaches to addressing historical injustices. Reparative planning emerges as an act of decolonization and a force for liberation, prioritizing just sustainability for Black and African American communities. It seeks to dismantle the urban planning legacies designed intentionally to marginalize communities.

The notion of "*where goal dictates means*," as highlighted by Dobrucká (2014), is increasingly linked to the implementation of reparative planning. Rashad Williams, in his article "From Racial to Reparative Planning," emphasizes the role of African American communities in shaping planning goals and policies (Williams, 2020). Thus, if holding

the state accountable and centering community voices are the cornerstones of reparative planning, then the concept of "abolition in action," as described by Patrisse Cullors, co-founder of Black Lives Matter, resonates with the idea of reparations (Cullors, 2018).

Within the realm of urban planning, reparative planning carries significant implications for addressing historical injustices and advancing equity within historically marginalized communities. This introduction delves into the relationship between reparative planning and equity planning, underscoring their importance and the complexities at their intersection. Moreover, it explores the scope of reparative planning concerning Black America and Black immigrants in the United States, revealing how their experiences intersect with discussions on reparations and the implementation of reparative planning strategies.

Equity planning, a fundamental principle in urban planning, aims to rectify disparities and promote fairness in resource allocation and opportunity distribution within communities (Banerjee & Baetz, 2003). Reparative planning goes beyond addressing present-day disparities by confronting the historical roots of injustice inflicted upon historically marginalized communities, especially communities of color.

The symbiotic relationship between reparative planning and equity planning acknowledges the historical injustices such as chattel slavery, segregation, and discriminatory policies that continue to impact communities today (Angotti, 2008). By

addressing these legacies, reparative planning seeks to provide restitution and healing, ultimately fostering greater equity and social cohesion.

In the context of the United States of America, the scope of reparative planning is intricately linked to the experiences of Black America and Black immigrants. Historical oppression and exploitation have resulted in profound socioeconomic disparities that persist to this day (Massey & Denton, 1993). While sharing a history of racial discrimination, Black immigrants may face distinct challenges shaped by immigration policies, cultural identities, and transnational connections (Waters, 1999).

The discourse on reparations further complicates the landscape, particularly concerning Black Americans. Despite growing support, actual pathways to claiming reparations remain elusive and contentious (Darity Jr. & Mullen, 2021). Nonetheless, the discourse emphasizes the need for reparative planning initiatives to prioritize the needs and aspirations of Black communities and advocate for redress and restitution.

Integrating reparative planning within equity planning represents a pivotal step towards addressing historical injustices and promoting social justice and inclusion. By recognizing the interconnectedness of past and present inequities and amplifying the voices of systemically marginalized communities, reparative planning aims to create more equitable and resilient urban environments for all.

My Rationale for Reparative Planning

It is an intersectional approach to address the history of extraction, exploitation, and indoctrination -through the dismantling of oppressive regimes; positively transforming the wellbeing of the historically marginalized.

Research Questions

This thesis will explore the emergence of reparative planning in the US and its potential for addressing the needs of a diversity of underrecognized communities.

1. How are reparative planning approaches emerging in the US?
2. How are existing reparative planning cases addressing historical injustices and systemic inequalities faced by historically marginalized communities?
3. How can reparative planning frameworks adapt an intersectional perspective to address the unique needs of Black immigrants within their historical and socio-economic contexts?

Key Terms

Abolitionist Planning- is a transformative framework within urban planning that confronts and dismantles systemic racism and oppression, particularly targeting historically marginalized communities. It prioritizes community-led decision-making, challenges traditional planning paradigms, and advocates for policies and practices that center equity, justice, and the redistribution of power. Abolitionist planning aims to create inclusive, resilient, and thriving urban environments for all through its commitment to addressing historical injustices and empowering marginalized voices (Abbot, et al. 2018; Cullors 2019).

Intersectionality- is a theoretical framework that acknowledges the interconnected nature of social categories such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and ability, and how they intersect to shape individuals' experiences of oppression and privilege. It highlights the complexity of identity and the multiplicity of social inequalities that individuals may face due to their intersecting identities (Crenshaw 1989; 1991).

Equity Planning- is the intentional and systematic process of addressing racial disparities, injustices, and inequities within urban planning and policy-making to ensure fair and just outcomes for all racial and ethnic groups. This approach seeks to identify,

challenge, and dismantle institutionalized racism and discriminatory practices that have historically marginalized communities of color (Krumholz, 1982; Zapata & Bates, 2015).

Reparations- compensation or restitution provided to individuals or groups who have been unjustly harmed in the past, with the aim of restoring them as close as possible to their pre-harm baseline. This compensation is grounded in principles of political normativity and aims to address historical injustices by acknowledging past wrongs, healing wounds, and fostering trust and cooperation in present and future relationships (Wenar, 2006).

Reparative Planning- aims to address historical injustices and systemic inequalities in urban areas by promoting equitable distribution of resources, empowering communities, dismantling systemic biases, and advocating for social justice and inclusion. It involves acknowledging past harms, engaging communities, and investing in disinvested areas to create more just and sustainable urban environments (Williams, 2020).

DISCLAIMER

The foundational concept of reparative planning is not novel; numerous groups and organizations, both within and outside the planning field, have been advocating for its principles globally.

These initiatives often manifest as direct actions rooted in community care, diverging from mainstream urban planning theories and practices that historically centered whiteness and colonial ideologies.

While this thesis primarily focuses on the ambitions of planning systems within the United States of America and the impactful work being undertaken in this regional context, it is imperative not to overlook the efforts occurring beyond these borders. Reparative planning transcends geographical boundaries and is pertinent to historically oppressed groups worldwide.

As a cornerstone of this thesis, reparative planning is discussed within the context of its impact on Black and Black immigrant communities.

However, it is essential to recognize that the doctrine and practice of reparative planning extend beyond this demographic, encompassing all historically exploited and disempowered communities.

Laced through this thesis, highlighted in red, are my own layman responses, which provide not only satire but comment on the topics being discussed.

Research Methods

Overview:

This study will first review the literature on reparative planning, drawing on various theoretical approaches to planning. It will then explore and evaluate various case studies of reparative planning initiatives that attempt to address historical injustices and systemic inequalities. I will develop a scale to assess the extent of reparations enacted. The study will conclude with a speculative case study on Boston, visioning how reparative planning might be applied.

1. Literature Review

This scholarly synthesis will delve into the historical roots of inequitable urban development, acknowledging history as the foundation for the progression of reparative justice frameworks. Understanding the impacts of colonialism, imperialism, and discriminatory policies on urban landscapes is essential in contextualizing contemporary challenges. By reviewing historical accounts of urban planning decisions, we can trace the evolution of systemic injustices and their enduring effects on historically marginalized communities.

Building upon this historical analysis, the synthesis will explore theoretical frameworks of reparative justice and intersectionality. This critical examination fosters deeper reflection and imaginative speculation, paving the way for informed pathways to advancing justice and equity in our society.

In addition to historical context, the synthesis will also engage with contemporary literature on urban planning theories, approaches, and practices. By examining works on sustainable urban development, community engagement, gentrification, and equitable city design, we can identify strategies for addressing existing inequalities and promoting inclusive urban environments. Through this interdisciplinary approach, the synthesis seeks to illuminate the interconnectedness of historical legacies, theoretical frameworks, and practical interventions in the pursuit of reparative planning.

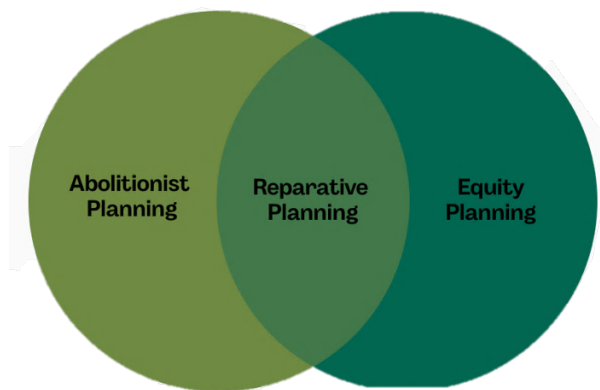


Figure 1a. Venn diagram showing the intersection of Equity Planning and Abolitionist Planning being Reparative Planning. (Stewart, 2024)

2. Practice Review

I then review case studies reparative planning practice to provide insight into how theoretical concepts are translated into actionable strategies on the ground. These case studies analyze projects that aim to address historical injustices, promote equity, and empower marginalized communities within urban development processes.

I chose cases studies for this practice review that reflect how the practice of reparative planning might be implemented through different institutions, municipalities, and governing entities. To find these case studies, I did a google search on the term "reparations" and looked in the recently published news section. Choosing newly published articles meant that I could diversify the conversation surrounding reparations within the planning space through uplifting current reparative measures. After reading through each newly published article I then filtered the results to cases that involved institutions that had done more than just study reparations and had dedicated resources or enacted polices to address reparations. Five case studies emerged that cover different approaches in a variety of planning spaces.

The case studies include:

Evanston, Illinois

The first municipal government in the nation to create and fund its own reparations program.

Ashville, North Carolina

Taking action to repair the legacy of highway building destroying a thriving Black business district .

Detroit, Michigan

Publicly-lead activism for reparations.

The State of California – Bruce’s Beach

The only state with a Reparations Taskforce.

Georgetown University & The Jesuits

Place of higher education taking accountability to incorporate reparations.

I use government and institutional documents and online information, as well as secondary literature and media reports to develop basic descriptions of each case. I analyze each case on their applicability and efficacy for addressing historical injustices and systemic inequalities experienced by historically marginalized communities. The review also explores policy interventions, legislative frameworks, grassroots advocacy efforts, and power dynamics involved in reparative planning.

| |
|---|
| 1) Public recognition |
| 2) Material redistribution |
| 3) Social and spatial transformation and repair |
| 3a) Value Black community and joy |
| 3b) Advance economic democracy |
| 3c) Recognize intersectionality |
| 3d) Critique state violence and build democratic institutions |
| 3e) Build environmental justice |

Table 1: Reparative Framework Williams & Steil (2023)

The practice review of each case study will observe this framework, which will then inform the critique.

3. Scale to assess **Extent of Reparations Enacted (ERE)**

I then develop a Likert scale to assess the extent of reparations enacted in each case. This scale draws on the literature and practice review, Williams and Steil's reparative framework (see Figure 2), and National African-American Reparations Commission (NAARC) reparations plan. The 5-point scale is defined as follows:

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 0 | No Action |
| 1 | Minimal Action |
| 2 | Limited Action |
| 3 | Moderate Action |
| 4 | Substantial Action |
| 5 | Full Enactment of Reparations |

Then, I will merge concepts from Williams and Steil's and the extent of reparations enacted scale to create a table that will help further analysis of reparative measures in the future.

4. Speculative Case Study on Boston

Finally, I develop a speculative scenario for reparative interventions and their implications for Black immigrant communities in Boston. This speculative approach, as Dirk Vis (2021) suggests, can envision alternative futurities and

explore potential outcomes of reparative policies or their absence. It uses an intersectional lens, considering how factors like race, gender, class, and immigration status intersect to shape experiences within the case of reparations within the City of Boston. This scenario will provide a brief historical context and then draw on published information (news articles, legislative ordinances, taskforce meeting materials, etc.) on the City of Boston's Reparations Taskforce. I will then explore how that process could include Black immigrant and undocumented communities, pulling from various organizations such as Undocublack Network, Embrace Boston, etc.

Limitations:

- I acknowledge potential limitations of this thesis, such as the inherent complexities of speculative analysis and the challenge of extrapolating findings to future contexts.
- The generalizability of findings may be limited by the specific context or scope of the research, requiring careful interpretation and contextualization of results.

Literature Review

"Embedded in the history and practice of US racial segregation, mainstream urban planning has been intentionally used as the spatial toolkit of White Supremacy, directly impacting the lives of many, including Blacks and African Americans"-(Agyeman, 2020; Agyeman & Stewart, 2023)

Historical Context of The Legacy of Urban Planning and Inequity

The theory of urban planning in the United States has a deeply interwoven legacy with socio-economic inequality, systemic racial discrimination, and the legacies of colonization. When we consider urban planning as a conduit for implementing policies and designs, we begin to understand the duality of inclusion and exclusion. Policies function similarly to electrical circuits within a complex system, supplying power to the broader framework. I believe that who is central to each policy and design is enforced through cultural practices (norms, mores, bias -conscious and unconscious, lived experiences, etc.), which becomes theory and then institutional practice.

This literature review delves into the broader context of colonization and imperialism and its relevance to reparations and urban planning. It will also explore the historical foundations of uneven urban development, specifically focusing on theories like zoning

laws and land use, redlining, urban renewal, highway construction, gentrification, and environmental injustices and their sustained effects on vulnerable communities.

Colonization and Urban Planning

The legacy of colonialism is entwined in urban planning and development. We continue to experience how colonization involves the seizure and exploitation of lands, often displacing indigenous populations and imposing foreign control over the socio-economic and cultural landscapes (Arneil ,2024).

So when we say:

Free Palestine, Free Congo, Free Guam, Free Hawai'i, Free Haiti, Free Bangladesh, Free Sudan, Free New Caledonia, Free Cameroon, Free the West Bank, Free Hong Kong, Free Venezuela etc. (Freedom House, 2024),

we are standing in solidarity with communities of people who are resisting a colonized state and challenging the oppression and silencing of vulnerable communities.

In the context of urban planning, colonization has had several long-lasting impacts:

- **Displacement and Dispossession:** Indigenous populations were and still are forcibly removed from their lands, which are then developed without their consent or involvement. This has led to the loss of ancestral territories and cultural heritage, contributing to ongoing social and economic disenfranchisement (Dorries et al., 2019; Porter, 2010).

- **Imposition of Western Planning Models:** Colonial powers imposed Western urban planning models that often disregarded indigenous knowledge systems and land-use practices. These models prioritized economic exploitation and control over the needs and rights of indigenous and local communities (Porter, 2010; Hugill, 2017).
- **Resource Exploitation and Environmental Degradation:** Colonization facilitated the exploitation of natural resources for the colonizers' benefit, leading to environmental degradation and long-term ecological impacts. This has disproportionately affected Indigenous and minoritized communities, who are often the most vulnerable to environmental injustices (Fox et al., 2021; Dorries et al., 2019).

Colonization has imposed ways of thinking that have centered on whiteness and the preservation of things close to it through frameworks of exclusion.

Imperialism and Urban Planning

Imperialism has also significantly shaped urban planning, especially in former colonies where colonial powers imposed their urban models, restricting self-determination and prioritizing militarism (Arneil, 2024). The imposition of colonial architecture and infrastructure often led to segregated urban spaces, facilitating control and economic exploitation while marginalizing local populations. These spatial formations and urban politics were designed to maintain imperial dominance and extract resources efficiently

(Smith, 2021). The United States has relayed imperialist ideologies imposed by the British into its urban development.

Colonial urban planning often prioritized the needs of the imperial powers, creating segregated areas that served both residential and strategic purposes (Arneil, 2024). This segregation not only entrenched social and economic disparities but also facilitated the deployment of police and armed forces to maintain order and suppress resistance. The military presence in urban planning ensured that cities remained under imperial control, contributing to the larger-scale urban politics aimed at reinforcing colonial dominance (Davis, 2006).

The legacy of these practices continues to influence contemporary urban planning. In many former colonies, the infrastructure and spatial organization established during imperial times still persist, perpetuating socio-economic inequalities and limiting self-determination. Moreover, modern urban planning in these regions often grapples with the historical continuities of these imperialistic policies, including the militarization of urban spaces and the ongoing socio-political challenges they present (Schwartz, 2019).

Power and Urban Planning

The power structure supporting the American Dream is a deep ethos in the cultural and economic fabric of the United States. This narrative, which promotes the idea that hard work and determination alone can lead to success, implicitly justifies the existing socioeconomic inequalities by placing the responsibility of failure on individuals rather than systemic issues. This ideology is racially coded as 'white,' perpetuating a framework that marginalizes Black and low-income communities (Healy & Hinson, 2013). As a result, the American Dream often overlooks the structural barriers these groups face, reinforcing a cycle of disadvantage that is difficult to break.

When we look at the impact of this narrative on Black and low-income communities, it is profound. The ability to decide on space, design, and access has been made political because of the power structures in decision-making. These structures fortified those who are in decision-making as sources of power. So, when it comes to the preservation of communities, decision-makers act in accordance with the places that will sustain said power i.e white spaces.

"Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will"-

Fredrick Douglas.

An emphasis on individual responsibility clouds the historical and ongoing discrimination that vulnerable groups face, such as redlining and employment discrimination, which have long-lasting effects on their socioeconomic status (Desmond & Emirbayer, 2010). Urban planning practices have historically reinforced these disparities, with policies that

segregated neighborhoods and limited access to essential resources and opportunities for Black and low-income residents (Rothstein, 2017). Again, we see these practices have created environments where poverty and disenfranchisement are prevalent, further entrenching the inequality justified by the American Dream narrative.

Reparations aim to address historical injustices and provide restitution for systemic discrimination, yet the dominant narrative of self-reliance and meritocracy conflicts with the notion of collective responsibility for past wrongs (Coates, 2014). Urban planning decisions that have disadvantaged Black communities highlight the need for reparative planning, as they emphasize the systemic nature of the inequality faced by these communities (Sharkey, 2013). Addressing these power injustices requires acknowledging the limitations of the American Dream, shifting sources of power back to the communities affected by inequity, and implementing policies that rectify historical wrongs, promoting true equity and inclusion.

The Impact of Zoning and Land Use Laws

The theoretical grounding of zoning and land use laws in the early 20th century is cemented in a response to rapid urbanization and industrialization (Fischel, 2004). Zoning was introduced to separate incompatible land uses, seemingly to protect public health, safety, and welfare. The 1926 Supreme Court decision in *Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co.* upheld the constitutionality of zoning, validating its use to segregate residential,

commercial, and industrial areas (Legal Information Institute, 2024). This landmark case established the principle that land use regulation was a legitimate exercise of police power, thereby granting local governments substantial authority to control land use (Hall, 2014). Zoning is one of the numerous legal circuits, like eminent domain (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2022), utilized to expropriate and demolish property.

Over time, zoning laws expanded from basic segregation of land uses to intricate regulations controlling various aspects of property development and usage, influencing urban planning significantly (Fischel, 2004). These zoning and land use policies have disproportionately affected low-income communities and, in recent years, further marginalized them, particularly racial and ethnic minorities.

Zoning practices were often explicitly discriminatory, designed to exclude minoritized identities from certain neighborhoods. For example, the first zoning laws in the United States were used to segregate Chinese immigrants on the West Coast and African Americans in various parts of the country (Silver, 1997). Even after overtly racial zoning laws were deemed unconstitutional, the legacy of exclusion persisted through socio-economic segregation, where zoning ordinances were used to maintain racial homogeneity cloaked under the pretense of preserving property values and community character.

The Federal Housing Administration's policies during the mid-20th century further institutionalized segregation by promoting suburban development for white families

while denying loans to underrepresented communities, exacerbating racial disparities in housing and wealth accumulation (Rothstein, 2017; Porter, 2010; Krumholz, 1982). These historical practices have left lasting impacts on urban landscapes, contributing to enduring segregation and inequality in American cities.

The Ongoing Legacy of Redlining

That is your side, and this is my side, so let me section it in red.

Institutionalized by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) policies at its establishment in 1934, redlining became a prominent discriminatory practice in mortgage lending (Fishback et al., 2022). The FHA formalized redlining by determining that providing loans in neighborhoods with Black residents was financially risky, as property values were projected to decrease (Lee, 2019). This policy was explicitly outlined in the FHA's 1938 Underwriting Manual (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1938), which recommended imposing restrictive covenants to prevent the infiltration of inharmonious racial groups (Fishback et al., 2022).

As a result, the FHA favored granting loans for new suburban developments over older urban areas or neighborhoods with Black residents. Here, you can see a measure of intentional divestment in Black spaces from the beginning. The Federal Reserve, which oversaw banks originating or purchasing FHA-insured loans, supported this practice by

encouraging banks to maintain FHA-insured loans, which were considered safer due to federal insurance (Nelson, 2015).

The unfair practice of redlining limited access to home loans for non-white and low-income communities, which had a significant impact on keeping people in poverty and making it difficult for them to build wealth. This was allowed by government policies and made worse by banks, creating long-lasting obstacles to owning a home and getting ahead financially for blacks and other disadvantaged groups (Jackson, 2021; Massey & Denton, 1993).

The Hidden Toll of Urban Renewal

Let me revive your side.

Another circuit that provides a charge to the systemic frameworks of the United States is urban renewal, which gained traction in the 1950s and 1960s. It was reinforced by federal legislation aimed at rejuvenating American cities (University of Louisville Archives, 2024). The 1949 American Housing Act initiated a federal program that provided funding for the clearance of areas classified as "slums" and the construction of new public housing (Lang & Sohmer, 2000). These policies empowered various systems through urban renewal projects. They were justified in the name of slum clearance,

which has and still currently systematically displaces vulnerable residents, leading to the destruction of neighborhoods and exacerbating inequality.

These projects prioritized the development of commercial and affluent residential areas at the toll and expense of low-income and minoritized neighborhoods, further entrenching racial and economic segregation (Angotti, 2008; Davidoff, 1965). The legacy of urban renewal is one that has created social, economic, and livelihood gaps that currently affect communities.

How Highways Shape Social Displacement

Actually, I will also add a highway on your side and a few other infrastructure things.

Like redlining and urban renewal, highway and infrastructure development has transformed space. The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 quickly authorized an expansive interstate highway system with the motives of connecting cities across the nation, promoting national defense, and enhancing economic growth (Weingroff, 1996). The construction of these highways and other infrastructure projects frequently isolated underserved neighborhoods from economic opportunities and services (Clavel & Wiewel, 1991). It should be emphasized that the planning and implementation of this project frequently neglected the concerns of vulnerable communities intentionally.

The development of interstate highways in urban areas caused the displacement of numerous residents, the destruction of homes and businesses, and the breakdown of social connections, leading to increased economic hardship and social disintegration in affected communities. These developments disrupted community cohesion and restricted access to jobs, education, and healthcare, reinforcing cycles of poverty and socio-economic stagnation (Agyeman, 2020; Clavel & Wiewel, 1991).

Highway development led to:

- Inadequate compensation for displaced residents,
- Heightened levels of air and noise pollution,
- Exacerbated racial and economic inequalities

The interlocking nature of these social injustices has long-lasting impacts on modern urban planning and policy discussions (Agyeman, 2020). This legacy continues to influence cities as they address the historical injustices stemming from highway development and work towards more equitable and inclusive infrastructure initiatives (Weingroff, 1996).

Gentrification: Urban Renewal in Disguise

My bad, let me revive your side this time with a cute indie cafe.

Ruth Glass in *Introduction: Aspects of change. In Centre for Urban Studies, (1964)*, describes the influx of middle-class residents into deteriorating urban neighborhoods, leading to the displacement of lower income, often minoritized communities as gentrification.

This process in the United States has been influenced by various policies and laws, such as the Housing Act (U.S. Congress, 1949), which facilitated suburbanization and disinvestment in urban centers, and more recently, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (U.S. Congress, 2017), which established Opportunity Zones to attract investment.

Black communities are disproportionately affected by gentrification due to systemic issues like redlining, which excluded them from access to credit and investment (Marcuse, 1986; Rothstein, 2017). The success of these frameworks of marginalization are interlocked. I now must emphasize that there are ecosystems of policies that flourish because of their symbiotic nature.

The effects of gentrification on these communities include displacement, loss of cultural heritage, and increased living costs. Redlining led to decades of disinvestment and poverty concentration (NCRC, 2018), stifling the economic mobility of Black communities. Gentrification processes further marginalize these communities by the

displacement of long-term residents, favoring wealthier individuals and businesses. This trend has been particularly detrimental to communities of color, as rising property values and living costs push out existing residents, erasing cultural and historical ties to the neighborhood and contributing to social and economic displacement (Williams, 2020; Hugill, 2017).

As gentrification increases property values, long-time residents are often forced to relocate, disrupting community ties and exacerbating socio-economic inequalities (Freeman, 2005; Hyra, 2015). Policies promoting equitable development and affordable housing are crucial to mitigating these adverse effects and ensuring that revitalization benefits all residents.

Environmental Injustices

We have created a mess on your side, but our side is ok; we also have trees

In the United States, environmental injustice is an intentional by-product of various laws and policies that have marginalized Black and low-income communities. The Civil Rights Act (U.S. Congress, 1964), particularly Title VI, sought to prohibit discrimination in federally assisted programs. However, it failed to prevent the systematic siting of hazardous waste facilities in communities of color (Bullard, 1990).

Studies, such as the General Accounting Office's 1983 report and the United Church of Christ's 1987 "Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States," highlighted that race was a

significant predictor in the location of hazardous waste sites, demonstrating institutionalized environmental racism (U.S.C. 1994).

One of the most significant milestones in addressing these disparities was President Bill Clinton's signing of Executive Order 12898 (The White House, 1994), which mandated federal agencies to incorporate environmental Justice into their missions. This order aimed to address the disproportionate environmental burdens faced by minority and low-income populations by ensuring their involvement in decision-making processes and providing greater access to public information. Even with these efforts, enforcement has often been inconsistent, and many communities still face significant environmental health risks due to ongoing disparities in regulatory oversight and resource allocation (EPA, 1994).

The legacy of these policies continues to affect communities today. For instance, the longstanding effects of redlining have resulted in lower property values and increased vulnerability to environmental hazards in minoritized neighborhoods (Rothstein, 2017). These areas are more likely to be chosen for undesirable land uses, such as waste facilities and industrial plants, perpetuating cycles of environmental and socio-economic disadvantage (Bullard, 1990). The ongoing struggles of these communities prove the need for robust and equitable environmental policies that address the historical and systemic roots of environmental injustice (Rothstein, 2017).

In the face of these advancements, minoritized communities continue to suffer from the legacies of these policies. While integral for environmental protection, the Clean Air Act

1970 (EPA, 2023) and Clean Water Act 1972 (EPA, 2024) have often been poorly enforced in low-income and minoritized neighborhoods. These areas face higher exposure to pollutants and inadequate infrastructure investment, perpetuating health disparities (Fox et al., 2021; Dorries et al., 2019). The ongoing influence of historical practices, such as redlining and discriminatory zoning laws, stresses the need for comprehensive and equitable environmental policies that address current and historical injustices (Bullard, 1990; Bryant, 1995).

Environmental Justice should also include the upliftment of the well-being of Black communities. It should address the quality of its education system, its economic growth, community health, collective mental wellness, demilitarization, and the targeted policing of Black bodies, in addition to the eradication of interlocking systems of oppression.

Gaps in Urban Planning Theories

While significant strides have been made in understanding and addressing historical injustices in urban planning, gaps in knowledge remain.

Urban planning theories have traditionally emphasized land use segregation via zoning regulations to safeguard public health and well-being. These theories often overlook the interconnectedness of race, socio-economic status, and other social factors, resulting in unequal effects on marginalized communities (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991).

The legacy of redlining by the Federal Housing Administration continues to harm minoritized communities through biased credit scoring and mortgage lending practices (Rothstein, 2017). Historically, redlined neighborhoods face greater environmental hazards, making it essential to evaluate and mitigate these impacts to address socio-economic and environmental risks comprehensively.

Environmental injustices in urban planning are deeply rooted in both historical and contemporary policies. While the Civil Rights Act of (1964) and Executive Order 12898 (EPA, 1994) were designed to combat these issues, enforcement has been inconsistent. Research must delve into the historical links between redlining and current environmental vulnerabilities, focusing on effective community-led solutions and robust policy enforcement.

Early zoning practices systematically excluded minority groups, leading to enduring socio-economic segregation (Fischel, 2004). To inform equitable urban planning frameworks and reduce systemic inequalities, it is important that we understand and address the intersectionality of these zoning practices and their long-term impacts.

Urban renewal and infrastructure projects have historically displaced vulnerable populations, reinforcing cycles of poverty and segregation. It is vital to examine the social and psychological impacts of such displacement. Developing inclusive urban renewal models and equitable transportation policies can mitigate adverse effects, while addressing the cultural impacts of gentrification is essential for sustainable revitalization.

Comprehensive studies are needed to assess the implementation and effectiveness of reparative planning initiatives. Exploring the intersectionality of race, class, and other social categories in urban planning is necessary to develop holistic and inclusive reparative frameworks (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991). The field can move towards a more just and inclusive future when we integrate reparative planning within equity planning and abolitionist frameworks. This approach not only acknowledges past harms but also seeks to dismantle systemic inequalities and create urban environments that are equitable and resilient for all communities.

These are reasons that urban planning theory must consider the implications for immigrant Black and Black undocumented communities. The marginalization of these groups in urban planning studies perpetuates the impacts of oppressive regimes. We must address this theory gap in order to inform practice and contribute to a more inclusive understanding of urban planning's role in systemic oppression and its potential for reparative Justice.

Reparations and Decolonization in Urban Planning

Historically, reparations have been conceptualized as compensatory mechanisms aimed at rectifying the economic and social damages caused by these historical wrongs (Wenar, 2006). Considering the interlocking systems of oppression (Crenshaw, 1989), reparations should extend beyond mere financial compensation; it should encompass broader demands for the decolonization and structural changes to rectify ongoing inequalities perpetuated by these past injustices.

When it comes to policy, the introduction of H.R.40 in the 118th Congress, sponsored by Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, aims to establish a commission to study and develop reparation proposals for African Americans, focusing on the historical and ongoing impacts of slavery and discrimination (H.R.40, 2023). This commission is tasked with compiling evidence, analyzing government roles, and recommending reparative actions, including formal apologies and compensation.

We must reinforce the power of policies when they are intentionally created with a group in mind. Being that reparations and urban planning are explored in a policy lens we must consider the relationship they both have and potential to better current systems.

Reparations in the context of urban planning involve addressing the historical and ongoing injustices rooted in colonization and systemic racism. This requires a comprehensive approach that includes both material and symbolic actions to rectify past harms and promote equitable development.

- **Land Restitution:** One of the critical components of reparative urban planning is the restitution of land to indigenous and marginalized communities. This involves returning ancestral lands and recognizing the sovereignty and self-determination of these communities in managing their territories (Williams & Steil, 2023; Dorries et al., 2019).
- **Inclusive Planning Processes:** Decolonizing urban planning necessitates inclusive and participatory processes that center the voices and knowledge of indigenous and marginalized communities. This involves rethinking planning frameworks to incorporate traditional land-use practices and ensuring meaningful community involvement in decision-making (Porter, 2010; Agyeman, 2020).
- **Economic and Social Investments:** Reparative planning also requires targeted investments in communities that have been marginalized to address historical disinvestment and promote socio-economic mobility. This includes funding for infrastructure, education, healthcare, and affordable housing aimed at reducing disparities and fostering inclusive growth (Metzger, 1996; Banerjee & Baetz, 2003).

The Emergence of Equity Planning

The emergence of equity planning has been crucial to combat these entrenched inequities conditioned by urban planning theories. Equity planning seeks to address racial disparities, promote social Justice, and ensure fair distribution of resources and opportunities. This framework involves identifying and challenging institutionalized racism within urban planning and advocating for policies that prioritize vulnerable communities (Zapata & Bates, 2015; Krumholz, 1982).

The foundations of equity planning can be traced back to the advocacy planning movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which sought to address the needs of the poor and marginalized communities through direct involvement in the planning process (Krumholz, 1982). The work of Norman Krumholz in Cleveland from 1969 to 1979 is a notable example, where equity objectives were prioritized in city planning efforts, leading to significant improvements in services for disadvantaged populations (Krumholz, 1982).

Equity planning puts in action the increasing options for those with the least advantages and involves planners who move resources, political power, and participation toward disadvantaged, lower-income people (Krumholz & Hexter, 2018). By focusing on systemically marginalized populations, equity planning aims to rectify historical injustices and create more inclusive urban environments. This involves not only addressing immediate needs but also implementing long-term strategies to dismantle systemic barriers that perpetuate inequality (Davidoff, 1965; Brooks, 2017).

This framework has evolved to include regional strategies, recognizing that issues of inequality often transcend municipal boundaries. For example, Benner, Pastor, and Swanstrom (2018) discuss how equity planning must encompass regional approaches to address complex urban issues effectively. This perspective is crucial as it acknowledges the interconnected nature of urban environments and the need for comprehensive strategies that consider the broader regional context (Benner et al., 2018).

In recent years, equity planning has also focused on the impacts of federal policies and the necessity of advocacy at the national level. The chapters in Krumholz and Hexter's (2018) edited volume illustrate the importance of federal context in shaping local and regional equity planning efforts. They highlight how planners must navigate and influence federal policies to support equitable urban development (Krumholz & Hexter, 2018).

The Emergence of Abolitionist Planning

Abolitionist planning is a movement that seeks to dismantle the interlaced structures of oppression that manifest through technocratic and often racially biased planning practices (Abbott et al., 2017; Cullors, 2019). It has emerged as a transformative framework that challenges traditional paradigms that perpetuate systemic inequalities and racial injustices. It advocates for a comprehensive restructuring of urban planning to address the historical and ongoing impacts of racial capitalism and colonialism.

The foundations of abolitionist planning are deeply rooted in the historical context of abolitionist movements. These movements, dating back to the 19th century, sought to end slavery and promote racial justice (Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia, 2024). This historical backdrop is crucial to understanding contemporary abolitionist planning, which continues the fight against systemic oppression and exploitation of vulnerable communities. According to Abbott et al. (2017), abolitionist planning calls for a radical reimagining of urban spaces by centering the experiences and expertise of systemically marginalized communities, particularly those of Black and Brown populations. This framework advocates for practices that are inclusive, participatory, and grounded in social justice.

Patrisse Cullors (2019), co-founder of the Black Lives Matter movement, emphasizes that true abolitionist praxis involves not only the deconstruction of carceral systems but also the creation of life-affirming alternatives that promote community self-determination and transformative justice. This approach necessitates a departure from merely inclusive or participatory planning models, advocating instead for a comprehensive restructuring that addresses the historical and ongoing impacts of racial capitalism and colonialism in urban development.

Several key principles characterize abolitionist planning. First, it prioritizes the empowerment of minoritized communities, ensuring they have a central role in planning and decision-making processes that affect their lives. Second, it seeks to address and repair the harms caused by systemic oppression, promoting healing and reconciliation within communities (Cullors, 2019). Third, it recognizes the interconnectedness of

struggles against oppression worldwide, advocating for solidarity and cooperation across borders (Abbott et al., 2017). Finally, abolitionist planning involves both the dismantling of oppressive systems and the creation of new, equitable structures that support community well-being and resilience.

Abolitionist planning provides a comprehensive framework for creating life-affirming urban environments. Its principles include people's power, transformative justice, anti-imperialism, and the deconstruction and reconstruction of oppressive systems (Cullors, 2019).

The Intersection of Abolitionist Planning and Equity Planning as Reparative Planning

The intersectional relationship between equity planning and abolitionist planning is evident in their shared commitment to dismantling systemic inequalities and promoting justice for marginalized communities. Their intersection forms the foundation of reparative planning.

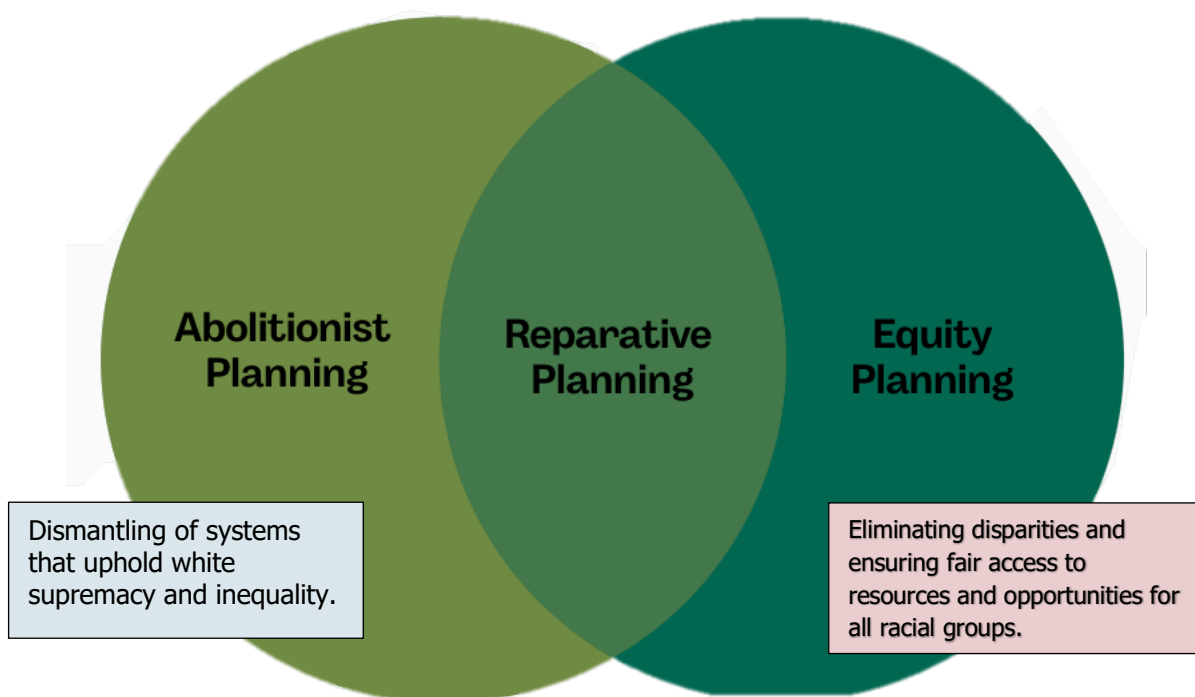


Figure 1b. Venn diagram showing the intersection of Abolitionist Planning and Equity Planning being Reparative Planning. (Stewart, 2024)

We understand that abolitionist planning fundamentally challenges the structures and policies that perpetuate racial injustice, advocating for the dismantling of systems that uphold white supremacy and systemic inequality (Cullors, 2019). This framework extends beyond traditional planning frameworks by calling for the complete abolition of oppressive systems and the reimagining of societal structures. Equity planning, on the other hand, focuses on the strategic elimination of disparities and the provision of equitable access to resources and opportunities for all racial groups (Krumholz, 1982). While both approaches share the goal of addressing systemic inequalities, they diverge significantly in their methodologies and theoretical support. Abolitionist planning demands a radical restructuring of societal norms and institutions, whereas equity planning operates within existing frameworks, striving to reform and improve them to achieve justice and fairness.

Reparative planning synthesizes these two approaches by directly addressing the root causes of urban inequality and implementing strategic interventions for redress. This approach involves revising zoning laws to promote inclusive and affordable housing, redirecting investments to historically underserved and systemically marginalized communities, and prioritizing environmental justice initiatives to rectify long-standing inequities (Williams & Steil, 2023; Porter et al., 2021). Reparative planning is emerging as a crucial framework in urban planning, representing a holistic and integrative approach that combines the radical goals of abolitionist planning with the pragmatic strategies of equity planning.

The conceptual framework of reparative planning posits that effective urban reform requires both the dismantling of oppressive structures and the proactive creation of equitable systems (Williams, 2020). This dual approach ensures not only the cessation of harm but also the promotion of healing and justice. This practice is distinguished by its commitment to addressing historical injustices and their contemporary manifestations through comprehensive policy reforms and community-driven initiatives.

Williams and Steil's approach to reparative planning in their article "The past we step into and how we repair it: A normative framework for reparative planning" is particularly noteworthy for its emphasis on structural and systemic change. Their framework advocates for the reallocation of resources, the restructuring of policy frameworks, and the reorientation of urban planning priorities to achieve long-term equity and justice. This framework, emerging from the broader context of racial and social justice, emphasizes the need for planning processes that recognize past wrongs and actively work to repair and mitigate their consequences. This will be used as a key resource to assess various reparative planning initiatives in this thesis.

In the article the framework integrates public recognition, material redistribution, and social and spatial transformation to address historic and ongoing racial injustices.

- Public recognition involves educating the public about the history and current impact of racial exclusion and exploitation, exemplified by their analysis of

Evanston's efforts to connect historical racial discrimination with contemporary inequalities (Richardson, 2021).

- Material redistribution refers to reallocating resources to address economic disparities, such as Evanston's Restorative Housing Program, which provides grants to Black residents affected by historical housing discrimination (Richardson, 2021). (*Evanston's reparative planning efforts will be further explored in practice review*)
- Social and spatial transformation encompasses creating environments where vulnerable communities can thrive. Specifically, 3a, (see *figure 2*) valuing Black community and joy, involves creating spaces and opportunities for Black individuals to experience collective well-being and self-determination. Through their various community center initiatives Cooperation Jackson, discussed in Williams and Steils framework analysis, uses a democratic and cooperative structure (Cooperation Jackson, 2024) to enforce this measure. This effort is about more than economic benefits; it fosters cultural and emotional spaces for Black joy and community.
- Advancing economic democracy-3b, (see *figure 2*), involves transforming economic structures to empower systemically marginalized communities. This could be in the form of creating democratically controlled investment structures to support projects that advance racial equity. This approach is used by Boston Ujima Project (2024) which aims to democratize economic power, ensuring that financial resources are managed by and for the communities they benefit.

These elements create a comprehensive approach to reparative planning that seeks to repair past harms and build a more just and equitable future. By focusing on the foundational causes of urban inequality, their work highlights the necessity of transformative change in achieving sustainable and inclusive urban development. This approach illuminates the importance of community involvement and empowerment in the planning process, ensuring that those most affected by inequality are central to the development and implementation of reparative strategies, hence a shift in power.

The intersection of abolitionist and equity planning principles within the framework of reparative planning offers a comprehensive and multifaceted approach to urban reform. By addressing both the structural causes and the symptoms of inequality, reparative planning seeks to create urban environments that are not only equitable and inclusive but also reflective of broader social justice principles.

NB// Reparative planning also plays a crucial role in addressing the deep-seated inequalities and injustices that have historically impacted marginalized and oppressed groups. This approach focuses on the equitable allocation of resources, the dismantling of systemic biases, and the empowerment of communities to redress historical wrongs. It is particularly valuable for addressing the disproportionate effects of past injustices on various groups, including Indigenous people, Latine, immigrants, LGBTQ+ communities, other systemically oppressed and marginalized communities and their intersections.

By acknowledging historical harms and actively working to prevent their perpetuation, we center reparative planning that creates environments conducive to the thriving of all individuals. Its emphasis on community engagement ensures that historically marginalized voices are at the core of decision-making processes, leading to the creation of more inclusive and just urban spaces. Ultimately, it is important to know that this approach promotes social justice, equity, and long-term sustainability, benefiting not just one group, but all communities that have been systematically excluded from full participation in society.

Practice Review

Applying and executing these concepts in real-world scenarios is essential to truly understanding and appreciating the importance and effects of theoretical ideas, especially those discussed in the literature review. In other words, **putting theories into practice allows us to see their actual value and influence.**

Urban planning is a practical discipline; as explored in the literature review, it is heavily influenced by legal frameworks, policies, theories, and writings. The concept of reparations through reparative planning operates within this framework.

This review delves into urban planning case studies that prioritize reparative actions and the implementation of reparations. It focuses on practical approaches to implementing these measures in response to a history of systemic oppression.

Evanston, Illinois

The City of Evanston exposes the root of its planning legacy by naming and confronting systems and their history by enacting reparative solutions specifically for its Black residents. Their approach involves streamlining policies to focus on the core issues, particularly addressing the needs and concerns of Black residents.

Initially scattered throughout Evanston, the African American population founded significant institutions such as Ebenezer A.M.E. Church, Second Baptist Church, and

Mount Zion Baptist Church, which all became important spiritual and social centers (Robinson, 1997). Evanston's African American community saw substantial expansion from approximately 125 residents in 1880 to 737 individuals by 1900. (Gavin, 2019), dating back to the 1850s. Many early community members held jobs in domestic and personal service roles. The population surge to 6,026 by 1940 resulted from the Great Migration, which commenced in 1910 (Wiese, 1999). Despite the community's growth and valuable contributions, segregation practices started to emerge, and real estate agents unofficially assigned West Evanston to African Americans, preventing them from residing in other areas (Gavin, 2019).

Segregation was encountered in different public services and establishments. Black patients were refused admission at local hospitals, leading to the founding of Evanston Sanitarium in 1914 (Barr, 2014). Similarly, Black youth were excluded from Boy Scout troops, leading to the creation of separate troops. Many restaurants, hotels, and shops did not cater to Black customers, and Black children were not allowed in most city parks and were seated on the balconies of movie theaters (Barr, 2014). In spite of these challenges, the Black community in Evanston remained strong, nurturing a sense of togetherness and purpose through their organizations and social connections (Robinson, 1997).

Evanston's approach to urban planning has been marked by forward-thinking development initiatives as well as exclusionary policies that reflect the broader trends of suburbanization in the United States. The original vision for Evanston was to create an ideal suburban getaway, detailed in the 1917 Plan of Evanston, spearheaded by Daniel

Burnham Jr. However, this vision also involved zoning practices that significantly contributed to racial and economic segregation (Ebner, 1988). It effectively excluded African Americans and lower-income residents through restrictive covenants and limited affordable housing (Keating, 2005).

Between 1919 and 1969, discriminatory covenants and redlining sponsored the idea that areas where Black residents lived were deemed risky investments (Jackson, 2021), which segregated Blacks to specific neighborhoods within Evanston and created deep wealth and opportunity gaps for Black residents. Given the impacts of suburbanization and redlining coupled with other discriminatory covenants, the City of Evanston championed the enactment of reparations.

In April 2019, Evanston, Illinois, one of the first cities to legislate for a reparation plan, dedicated \$400,000 of its tax revenue on cannabis sales (\$10 million total) to the Local Reparations Restorative Housing Program (LRRHP). The LRRHP provided eligible families— "*Black or African American persons having origins in any of the Black racial and ethnic groups of Africa.... must reside in Evanston at the time of disbursement of funds*"— up to \$25,000 for a down payment or home repairs (Robinson & Thompson, 2021). Reparations and any process for restorative relief must connect the harm imposed on the city. The fund has received an additional \$21,343 (Richardson, 2021) in private funding and will request more funding from the Evanston City Council as needed.

Establishing a reparative program like this one laid the foundation for many others. It is the first municipal government in the nation to create and fund its own reparations program, and it illuminated the practicalities of how reparations could be actualized.

Asheville, North Carolina

Like Evanston, Illinois, Asheville is no stranger to racist policies, practices, and procedures. Asheville was one of the many cities in the United States that participated in urban renewal in the 1970s (Schwab, 2018). The story of one of Asheville's prominent African American communities did not begin nor end with urban renewal.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Asheville's East End/Valley Street neighborhood flourished as a vibrant African American ecosystem, fostering businesses, churches, schools, and social institutions that catered to its residents. Despite the challenges of segregation, the inhabitants of East End/Valley Street forged a resilient and tight-knit community.

In the late 1950s, Asheville saw significant changes due to urban renewal efforts. Led by the Asheville Housing Authority (AHA) and the Asheville Redevelopment Commission (ARC), this ambitious project, considered one of the largest in the Southeast, aimed to address housing issues, upgrade infrastructure, and align road construction with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) (Judson, 2014).

The reshaping of the area's landscape and social fabric deeply impacted the East End/Valley Street neighborhood, and the consequences of these efforts were profoundly systemic. There was an erasure of spatial identity for those affected.

The ARC's collaboration with the NCDOT led to the construction of the Town Expressway through the Hill Street area, severing the neighborhood's connection to downtown Asheville and displacing numerous African American families (Judson, 2014). This displacement was emblematic of a broader trend observed in many American cities during the mid-20th century, where urban renewal disproportionately affected communities of color (Schwab, 2018).

The Model Cities Program (Young, 2006), introduced in the mid-1960s, aimed to revitalize urban areas but often resulted in the loss of affordable housing and community disruption (Judson, 2014). In the case of Asheville, the East End/Valley Street neighborhood, designated as both a Model Cities renewal project and a DOT project, faced significant upheaval despite residents' need for more awareness and influence over these decisions (Judson, 2014). The impact extended beyond physical displacement, as residents experienced social dislocation and racial tensions associated with desegregation efforts (Judson, 2014).

Despite best intentions, this resulted in the displacement of vibrant Black communities and the removal of Black residents and homeowners, many into substandard public housing. Absentee landlords and exploitative business practices exacerbated residents'

challenges, highlighting the complex intersections of race, class, and urban development (Judson, 2014).

So, in the efforts to help generational wealth for Black people who have been hurt by income, educational, and healthcare disparities, in addition to the societal and political catalysts of 2020, the Asheville City Council designed its city's reparation program to incorporate these goals to uplift Black communities.

Resolution No.20-128 was enacted on July 14, 2020, to acknowledge the government's adverse role in wealth-building opportunities for Black communities (Associated Press, 2020) with a commitment of \$2.1 million from city land sales on Charlotte Street to beer yeast maker White Labs, totaling \$3.7 million for land purchased in the 1970s as part of the city's urban renewal programs that tore apart Black communities (Associated Press, 2021). The reparations process in Asheville will focus on five impact areas: housing, economic development, health, education, and criminal justice.

Ultimately, Asheville's urban planning history reflects broader patterns of systemic inequality and the enduring legacy of discriminatory policies on historically marginalized communities.

Detroit, Michigan

Urban planning in Detroit, as detailed in Jamon Jordan "*A Mighty Long Way: How Black People Moved In & Out and Around Detroit*", has a storied history that reflects broader racial dynamics and systemic inequities that have significantly impacted Black communities.

In the early 20th century, Detroit's booming auto industry attracted a substantial number of Black workers from the South during the Great Migration. However, these newcomers faced significant housing discrimination, including redlining and racially restrictive covenants, which confined them to overcrowded neighborhoods like Black Bottom and Paradise Valley. Though these challenges created barriers, these areas flourished culturally and economically, becoming centers for Black business, entertainment, and civil rights activism (Jordan, 2024).

The mid-20th century brought a wave of urban renewal projects under the guise of combating urban blight (Dewar, 2022). These projects often resulted in the displacement of Black residents and the destruction of established communities. During the 1950s and 1960s, Black Bottom and Paradise Valley were destroyed to make room for the Chrysler Freeway and other developments, resulting in the displacement of numerous Black families into inadequately maintained and underfunded public housing projects (Jordan, 2024).

After World War II, city planners in Detroit worked hard to try and stop the city from declining both physically and economically. Even though they achieved some successes with an award-winning master plan and various redevelopment projects, Detroit ultimately became known as a symbol of urban decay. (Dewar, 2022). Government programs were often ineffective and sometimes destructive to community needs (Thomas, 2013). It is obvious that these planners worked during the urban renewal era without much consideration for low-income and African American residents, and their efforts to stabilize racially mixed neighborhoods largely failed. The steady decline in industrial prowess and the decentralization of white residents counteracted efforts to rebuild the city (Thomas, 2013).

The construction of the Interstate Highway System further exacerbated these issues. Highways like I-75 and I-94 were deliberately routed through Black neighborhoods, causing further displacement and fragmenting communities (Mahajan, 2024). These projects uprooted thousands of residents and contributed to the economic decline of affected areas by reducing property values and limiting access to business districts (Jordan, 2024; Thomas, 2013).

Black Detroit residents exhibited extraordinary resilience and creativity in navigating through substantial hardships. The Black community's response included robust legal challenges against discriminatory practices and establishing vital community organizations. Figures like Dr. Ossian Sweet, who defended his right to homeownership in a white neighborhood against violent mobs, symbolized the fight for housing equality (Bourbeau, 2015). The NAACP and other civil rights organizations played crucial roles in

these battles, achieving significant legal victories such as the Shelley v. Kraemer decision in 1948, which ruled that racially restrictive covenants were unenforceable (Jordan, 2024).

In the latter half of the 20th century, efforts to revitalize Detroit continued to marginalize Black residents. The effects of these urban planning decisions have been profound and enduring, contributing to racial segregation, economic disparities, and social stratification. However, the legacy of these policies is also marked by the Black community's persistent struggle for justice and equity (Jordan, 2024).

The story of urban planning in Detroit is thus a testament to both the systemic challenges imposed by discriminatory policies and the indomitable spirit of Black Detroiters who have continuously fought for their rights and transformed their communities in the face of adversity (Jordan, 2024; Thomas, 2013).

Today, approximately eighty-two percent of Detroit's population is Black (U.S. Census Bureau, June 10, 2024). Reparations are necessary to undo generations of disinvestment in historically underserved communities and to correct long-standing trauma that Black residents still hold today.

The Detroit City Council's Resolution Supporting Community Reparations for Black Detroit demands a "*strong and sufficient U.S. federal government program funding commitment to reparations, funding programs that should be democratically administered at the local level for the benefit of Detroit's Black community applying a racial equity framework, including without restriction or limitation such popular social*

initiatives as shall be necessary and appropriate to support this core Detroit population's needs and capacities for protection, enforcement and fulfillment of all their human rights' (Sheffield, 2021, pg 30).

This resolution sets up a four-member executive committee of the task force consisting of a chair and three working coordinators to be appointed by City Council President Mary Sheffield. The city's nine-member legislative body appoints the other nine task force members and will hold public interviews. The financial support for this program is proposed to come from revenues from recreational marijuana sales in the state of Michigan. The Detroit measures come at a time when at least one state and several cities across the nation have passed measures supporting reparations for Black people. It will be a role for the task force to decide on the focus/foci of reparations.

The State of California – Bruce's Beach

In the early 20th century, Charles and Willa Bruce, a Black couple, purchased a beachfront property in Manhattan Beach, California, and established Bruce's Beach Lodge in 1912. This resort provided:

- a rare and much-needed recreational space for Black residents,
- featuring amenities like a lodge, café, dance hall, and
- dressing tents.

The resort encountered pervasive harassment and threats from white neighbors and the Ku Klux Klan, aimed at intimidating the Bruce family and their clientele, despite its widespread popularity. By the 1920s, racial tensions in Manhattan Beach escalated, and local white residents, along with city officials, used eminent domain (U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 2014) to seize Bruce's Beach under the pretext of developing a public park. In 1924, the city condemned the property and forced out the Bruces and other Black families despite their requests for fair compensation. The Bruce family received only \$14,500, a fraction of the property's value, and could not purchase alternative property in the area due to prevailing racial discrimination (The Guardian, 2021; Ross, 2022). This instance is among the numerous occurrences in which urban planning policies resulted in the displacement of Black communities and the deprivation of their means of living. Post-emancipation, land owned by Blacks was often stolen through trickery, fraud, and discriminatory policies and practices. Similar to countless individuals who have faced marginalization, they had to initiate a fresh start by establishing a new source of income. One can envision the economic and social challenges brought about by this upheaval, along with the associated emotional and health-related repercussions.

Contrary to the stated intentions of building a park, the seized land remained undeveloped for decades. Historical accounts from the 1940s and 1950s describe the area as neglected, overgrown with weeds, and littered with debris (Judson, 2014). In the 1950s and 1960s, Manhattan Beach began developing the area, incorporating it into a terraced park and renaming it several times before finally acknowledging its historical

significance. The struggle to reclaim Bruce's Beach gained momentum in the 2000s, with activists and community leaders advocating for justice and restitution.

In 2021, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed SB 796, a landmark bill that authorized the transfer of the land back to the Bruce family descendants (Douglas, 2022; SB 796, 2021). This move was a significant milestone in the fight for reparations and recognition of the injustices faced by Black Americans.

The history of Bruce's Beach exemplifies the broader patterns of racial discrimination and urban planning policies that targeted Black communities across the United States. The forced removal and subsequent neglect of Bruce's Beach reflect systemic efforts to disenfranchise Black property owners and dismantle thriving Black communities (Mullen & Darity, 2022). The return of Bruce's Beach to the descendants of Charles and Willa Bruce in 2021 marked a significant step towards addressing historical injustices. An apology from Governor Newsom and recognition of the broader implications for reparations accompanied this act of restitution. The return of the land is seen as a model for other communities seeking to rectify past wrongs and support Black families in reclaiming their heritage and economic potential (Ross, 2022).

In recognition of the historical injustices faced by African Americans, Assembly Bill 3121 (AB 3121) was enacted on September 30, 2020. This bill establishes the Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans (Task Force or Reparations Task Force) (AB 3121, 2020). The California Department of Justice provides the Task Force with administrative, technical, and legal assistance. AB 3121 charges the

Task Force with studying the institution of slavery and its lingering adverse effects on living African Americans, including descendants of persons enslaved in the United States and on society. The Task Force will recommend appropriate remedies of compensation, rehabilitation, and restitution for African Americans, with particular consideration for descendants of persons enslaved in the United States. By statute, the Task Force will issue a report to the Legislature, which will be available to the public.

On June 29, 2023, the Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans issued its final report to the California Legislature (California Department of Justice, 2023). The report comprehensively surveys the ongoing and compounding harms experienced by African Americans due to slavery and its lingering effects on American society today. It proposes a detailed reparations plan to address these harms, in line with the directives established by AB 3121 (2020). Any reparations program proposed under AB 3121 would need to be enacted by the Legislature and approved by the Governor. At this time, there is no claims process in place. The role of the Reparations Task Force is to develop recommendations for future legislative action.

The history of Bruce's Beach is a stark reminder of the systemic racism and economic disenfranchisement faced by African Americans. The seizure of Bruce's Beach not only stripped away a valuable economic asset from the Bruce family but also signaled to the broader Black community that their presence and prosperity were unwelcome. Today, urban planning must consider these historical injustices and strive to create equitable spaces that honor the contributions and rights of marginalized communities. This

involves acknowledging past wrongs, such as those inflicted upon the Bruce family and actively working towards reparative justice.

Bruce's Beach is a powerful symbol of the broader struggle for racial equity in the United States. The work of the Reparations Task Force under AB 3121 (C.A. Legislative Assembly, 2020) is a critical step toward addressing the historical and ongoing impacts of slavery and systemic racism. By studying these issues and proposing concrete remedies, California aims to pave the way for meaningful reparative actions that acknowledge and address past injustices. The case of Bruce's Beach is also a reminder of the enduring impact of discriminatory urban planning policies and the importance of acknowledging and rectifying historical injustices. It highlights the need for continued advocacy and legislative action to support reparations and promote equity in urban development. As we begin to see more communities recognize the importance of addressing past wrongs, the story of Bruce's Beach can inspire and guide efforts to build a more just and inclusive society.

The State of California, through Assembly Bill 3121 (C.A. Legislative Assembly 2020), enacted on September 30, 2020, is currently the only state to have developed a task force for reparations on a statewide level. Other major cities like San Francisco, within the state, are also seeking to enact reparations.

Georgetown University and The Jesuits

Before urban planning, chattel slavery was one of the main pipelines that transformed space and industry in the Americas (National Park Service, 2024). This practice played a crucial role in the development of the United States economy. The bodies of the enslaved served as America's most significant financial asset, forced to sustain the nation's most valuable exported commodities. It is essential to understand that this commoditization extended beyond exports to encompass forced labor, a lucrative trade at the time. Slavery is, without a doubt, considered America's first big business (Beckert, 2015).

The commodification of human bodies through enslavement led to their dehumanization. Individuals were considered chattel or property to be bought, sold, used, and traded without regard for their humanity. Due to its economic benefits, many institutions within the states profited from the trafficking and forced enslavement of Africans. Thus, it is unsurprising that educational and religious institutions, particularly elite universities, have a history of participating in this economy (Reilly, 2017).

Georgetown University and the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) are two of the many institutions that have a deep-rooted historical association with the institution of slavery, primarily through the sale of 272 enslaved individuals in 1838. In order to mitigate the financial difficulties faced by the university, the Jesuits resorted to selling those individuals to enslavers in Louisiana. This significant event symbolized a troubling period in the university's past, connecting its initial success to the financial gains derived from

the use of enslaved labor. (Rothman, 2018). The sale's orchestrator, Rev. Thomas F. Muledy, then-president of Georgetown, played a pivotal role in this transaction (GU272 Memory Project, 2024).

The impacts of this historical event on these enslaved individuals, known as the GU272, and their descendants have been profound and long-lasting. These enslaved individuals were transported to Louisiana, where they faced harsh conditions and family separations. The legacies of trauma and systemic inequality stemming from slavery have permeated generations, manifesting in social and economic disparities that descendants continue to navigate today (Swarns, 2016). The GU272 Descendants Association was established to address these ongoing impacts, advocating for recognition, reparations, and reconciliation ("Our History," 2024).

Efforts to address and heal from this historical injustice have included initiatives like the Georgetown Memory Project and the establishment of the Descendants Truth & Reconciliation Foundation. These efforts aim to acknowledge the wrongdoings, support descendants, and foster a more inclusive and equitable future. Georgetown University's ongoing engagement with this aspect of its history, including student-led actions and institutional responses, reflects a broader movement towards addressing historical injustices related to slavery and their enduring consequences (Swarns, 2016; "Report of the Working Group," 2016).

These efforts include financial pledges, community projects, and student-led initiatives to promote reconciliation and provide tangible support to the descendants. Georgetown

University and the Jesuits have implemented substantial measures to acknowledge and address their historical connections to slavery and to support the descendants of the 272 enslaved people who were sold to pay off the university's debts in 1838 (Chavez, 2023). They have pledged \$27 million to the Descendants Truth & Reconciliation Foundation, with \$10 million from Georgetown and \$17 million from the Jesuits in monetary contributions and plantation land (Kouevi, 2023). This initiative is part of a larger plan to raise \$1 billion to support lifelong education, anti-racism advocacy, and elderly care for the descendants (Chavez, 2023).

In 2019, through a student-led referendum, Georgetown students approved a \$27.20 per semester fee to be added to their tuition to fund reparations for the descendants. Subsequently, the university revealed a plan to generate approximately \$400,000 annually via voluntary contributions from alums, faculty, students, and philanthropists to support community initiatives benefiting the descendants, thus avoiding the need to impose additional fees on the students (Swarns, 2019).

Georgetown University's President, John J. DeGioia, emphasized the importance of these efforts, stating that acknowledging the brutal truths of the university's past guides the urgent work of seeking and supporting reconciliation in the present and future (Chavez, 2023). These initiatives reflect a broader commitment to addressing historical injustices and promoting racial healing within the university community and beyond.

The involvement of the Georgetown community, including students, alums, faculty, and philanthropists, highlights a collective responsibility to rectify past wrongs and support the descendants of those wronged by the university's actions nearly two centuries ago.

Analysis of Case Studies Using Williams and Steil's Reparative Framework

Each case can be assessed through the lens of Rashad Williams and Justin Steil's (2023) reparative framework, as discussed in "The Past We Step Into and How We Repair It". Table 2 summarizes each case based on their framework.

Table 2. Williams and Steil’s Reparative Framework (2023) Used to Analyze Case Studies on Reparations in the United States of America

| Case Study | Evanston, Illinois | Asheville, North Carolina | Detroit, Michigan | The State of California – Bruce’s Beach | Georgetown University & The Jesuits |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|
| Public Recognition | Public education on racial exclusion. | Acknowledges government's adverse role. | Resolution supporting reparations. | Apology and recognition by Governor. | Public acknowledgment by university. |
| Material Redistribution | \$400,000 from cannabis tax revenue, where \$25,000 grants given for home purchase/repair. | \$3.7M from land sales. | Proposed funding from cannabis sales. | Return of Bruce's Beach to descendants. | \$27M pledge to Descendants Truth & Reconciliation Foundation. |
| Social and Spatial Transformation | Limited to housing improvements. | Focus on housing, economic development, health, education, and criminal justice. | Focus to be determined by task force. | Limited to specific land restitution. | Supports educational and community initiatives. |
| Value Black Community and Joy | Not directly addressed. | Not directly addressed. | Not directly addressed. | Supports reclaiming heritage and economic potential. | Not directly addressed. |
| Advance Economic Democracy | Limited to housing market. | Broader economic development efforts. | Emphasis on racial equity framework. | Task Force to study and recommend reparations, | Voluntary contributions for community support. |
| Recognize Intersectionality | Not directly addressed | Addresses multiple areas of oppression. | Aims to address broad socioeconomic needs. | Focus on descendants of enslaved persons. | Focus on descendants of enslaved persons. |
| Critique State Violence and Build Democratic Institutions | Limited focus on state violence and institution building. | Recognizes the historical exploitation and aims for broader justice. | Task force to decide on focus areas, including state violence. | Task Force to address systemic racism and propose remedies. | Emphasis on reconciliation and addressing historical injustices. |
| Build Environmental Justice | Not directly addressed. | Not directly addressed. | Not directly addressed. | Giving back their land. | Not directly addressed. |

The reparative efforts in Evanston, Illinois, particularly the Local Reparations Restorative Housing Program, are in line with the framework's focus on material redistribution and public acknowledgment of historical injustices. Yet, to fully comply with the framework's standards, they must strengthen its initiatives for social and spatial transformation and create environments conducive to Black joy and economic democracy.

Asheville, North Carolina's reparations program, which addresses housing, economic development, health, education, and criminal justice, showcases a broader application of the framework by how they tackle intersectional issues and critiquing state violence through historical acknowledgment and financial commitments.

Detroit, Michigan's historical urban planning context highlights systemic inequalities, and current reparative efforts need to emphasize material redistribution and transformative community engagement to align with the framework's criteria.

The case of Bruce's Beach in Los Angeles, California, aligns with the framework's principles by addressing environmental justice and public recognition. However, continued focus on building sustainable, democratic community structures is essential.

Georgetown University and The Jesuits address reparative efforts through public recognition and material redistribution by centering reconciliation and social transformation in the forms of educational and community initiatives. It's crucial that they now include environmental justice along with black joy.

It is important to acknowledge that implementing reparations does not have a one-size-fits-all solution. These cases demonstrate varying degrees of adherence to Williams and Steil's reparative planning framework, emphasizing the necessity of a comprehensive approach to fully address the legacy of historical injustices and systemic inequalities. For me that reinforces the idea that the community and people should be considered in practice and given the power to make decisions.

Analysis and Critique of Current Reparative Planning

Cases Using Extent of Reparations Enacted (ERE) Scale

Purpose of Creating the Extent of Reparations Enacted (ERE) Scale

I developed the Extent of Reparations Enacted (ERE) scale based on the literature and practice review, in addition to using Williams and Steil's (2023) reparative framework and the National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC) reparations plan (2024) as a point of reference. This scale allows us to examine various pathways for reparations through defined measures. It provides a structured method for evaluating and comparing different reparative initiatives and programs.

It was also essential to me that the scale enhances clarity and transparency by defining clear criteria for each level of action, from no action to full enactment, where stakeholders can readily appreciate the extent of progress or dedication of different initiatives towards reparations, enhancing the comprehensibility and transparency of the process.

My aim is for the scale to serve as a starting standard for gauging progress and for it to facilitate organizations and policymakers in transparently showcasing the status of their efforts. The ERE scale is also an educational tool, informing the public, stakeholders, and policymakers about the various dimensions and necessary actions involved in

reparative planning. Detailed descriptions for each level of the scale provide actionable guidance on progressing from one stage to the next. The scale emphasizes essential elements such as material redistribution, public acknowledgment, community empowerment, and the creation of new institutions.

Overall, the ERE scale is a practical tool designed to facilitate evaluating, comparing, and enhancing reparative initiatives, ultimately contributing to more effective and equitable reparative planning.

The Extent of Reparations Enacted (ERE) Scale

This scale has a 0-5 point system; by choosing this range, it centers on a simple point framework that affords a method that is easy to use. They are as follows:

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 0 | No Action |
| 1 | Minimal Action |
| 2 | Limited Action |
| 3 | Moderate Action |
| 4 | Substantial Action |
| 5 | Full Enactment of Reparations |

Point 0

| | |
|---|-----------|
| 0 | No Action |
|---|-----------|

- No efforts or initiatives related to reparations have been undertaken.
- There is no recognition of historical injustices or commitment to addressing them.

Point 1

1

Minimal Action

- Some symbolic actions or minor programs might exist, but they lack significant impact or resources.
- There are initial discussions or acknowledgments of the need for reparations.

Point 2

2

Limited Action

- Some reparative initiatives are in place, such as small-scale compensatory programs.
- Efforts include basic public education on historical injustices.
- Material redistribution efforts are minimal and not widely implemented.
- Limited engagement with the affected communities and stakeholders.

Point 3

3

Moderate Action

- Significant reparative programs are being implemented, including financial compensation and public recognition of historical injustices.
- Some community-driven projects and participatory planning processes are established.
- Initial steps towards social and spatial transformation, but these are not comprehensive.
- There are efforts to address intersectionality and economic democracy, but these are still developing.

Point 4

4

Substantial Action

- Comprehensive reparative planning initiatives are in place, involving substantial material redistribution and public acknowledgment.
- Community-driven projects and participatory planning processes are well-established.

- Significant progress towards social and spatial transformation and addressing intersectionality.
- Concrete steps towards building new institutions and promoting economic democracy.

Point 5

5

Full Enactment of Reparations

- Reparative planning is fully integrated and implemented, addressing all aspects of historical injustices comprehensively.
- Strong community empowerment and participatory processes are central to planning efforts.
- New institutions and social structures are established to sustain long-term justice and equity.
- Complete alignment with the principles of reparative planning, including radical critiques of state violence and efforts towards climate justice.

The Extent of Reparations Enacted (ERE) Table

We can go further to create an ERE (Extent of Reparations Enacted) table, referencing William and Steil’s Reparative Framework (2023). This table assesses reparative interventions in five categories: Public Recognition, Material Redistribution, Intersectional Approach, Community Participation, and Institutional Reform. Each point of the ERE scale corresponds to varying levels of action in these categories.

| | Public Recognition | Material Redistribution | Intersectional Approach | Community Participation | Institutional Reform |
|--------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ERE 0 | none | none | none | none | none |
| ERE 1 | some to significant | none | none | none | none |
| ERE 2 | some to significant | some | none | none | none |
| ERE 3 | significant | significant | some | some | some |
| ERE 4 | significant | significant | significant | significant | some |
| ERE 5 | significant | significant | significant | significant | significant |

| Category | Description |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Public Recognition | Measures the extent to which reparative efforts acknowledge and make visible the historical injustices and contributions of affected communities. |
| Material Redistribution | Evaluates the efforts made to redistribute resources and wealth to address economic disparities caused by historical injustices. |
| Intersectional Approach | Assesses how reparative efforts address multiple overlapping forms of oppression that affect communities. |
| Community Participation | Measures the extent to which affected communities are involved in the planning and implementation of reparative efforts. |
| Institutional Reform | Evaluates the changes made to institutions to support reparative efforts and address systemic issues. |

Table 3: (Extent of Reparation Enacted Table, Stewart & Loh, 2024) – *Penn Loh, Distinguished UEP Faculty and practitioner of Community Practice*

Critique of Case Studies Using the ERE Scale

With the aid of the ERE scale, I assess each practice review case program and provide recommendations.

Evanston, Illinois:

Evanston's Local Reparations Restorative Housing Program merits a **3 - Moderate Action** rating on the ERE scale.

While the program makes significant strides in financial compensation and public recognition of historical injustices, it needs to improve in social and spatial transformation. The current emphasis on housing enhancements is praiseworthy, but the programs exhibit deficiencies in cultivating atmospheres that promote Black joy, economic democracy, and more extensive systemic transformation. Evanston needs to enhance its community-driven projects and participatory planning processes to align more closely with the higher levels of the reparative framework.

While Evanston's program has successfully set a precedent in the realm of municipal reparations, it risks being perceived as a token effort if it does not expand its scope. To comprehensively address historical injustices Black residents face, the program should expand to cover areas such as employment, education, and health. To have a substantial impact, the program needs to adopt intersectional strategies that address the various layers of oppression experienced by the Black community.

Recommendation: To increase the rating, Evanston should expand its reparative initiatives beyond housing, incorporating broader economic, social, and environmental justice measures. Though we understand that its reparation plan is to address its history of redlining, enhancing community participation and addressing intersectional and systemic issues would align more closely with the higher levels of the reparative framework. To achieve systemic change, a comprehensive long-term plan for community empowerment and economic democracy must be developed.

Asheville, North Carolina:

Asheville's reparations efforts can be rated as a **4 - Substantial Action** on the ERE scale.

The city's comprehensive approach, which includes housing, economic development, health, education, and criminal justice, reflects a robust application of the reparative framework. Asheville's initiatives address multiple intersecting areas of oppression and include financial commitments to uplift Black communities. However, the long-term sustainability and full integration of these measures into broader systemic transformation efforts are areas where further progress is necessary.

Given Asheville's significant efforts, the challenge lies in the consistency and depth of these reparative actions across all sectors. The success of the reparations program hinges on the city's ability to maintain momentum and adapt to evolving community

needs. Without a solid framework for monitoring and evaluating progress, the initiatives may lose their impact over time. The city needs to ensure that reparations are not seen as a series of isolated projects but as part of a broader strategy for systemic change. Incorporating more robust mechanisms for accountability and feedback from affected communities could help sustain and deepen the reparative work.

Recommendation: Asheville should continue to develop its programs with a stronger emphasis on cultural initiatives and participatory economic planning. Addressing environmental justice issues and building new democratic institutions would help the city achieve more reparative justice.

Detroit, Michigan:

Detroit's current reparative efforts align with a **2 - Limited Action** on the ERE scale.

The city's resolution supporting community reparations is an important first step, but the implementation and material redistribution remain minimal. While the proposal to use cannabis sales revenue for reparations demonstrates initial efforts to address historical injustices, the actual impact on community engagement and transformation is still limited. It would prove beneficial for Detroit to advance its initiatives to encompass broader socioeconomic needs and more substantial community-driven projects to achieve a higher rating.

Detroit is currently in the early phases of its efforts towards reparations, but there is a significant disparity between the city's intentions and actual results. The reliance on

revenue from cannabis sales as a primary funding source raises concerns about the sustainability and adequacy of addressing the substantial harms suffered by the Black community. The reparative framework lacks a clear vision for the equitable distribution of these funds to ensure long-term benefits and prevent the perpetuation of existing inequalities. For Detroit to move beyond initial actions, it needs to establish a comprehensive and transparent plan with extensive community engagement, addressing intersecting oppressions, and incorporating measures for economic and social justice.

Recommendation: Detroit needs to implement more concrete and comprehensive reparative actions that go beyond proposals. Enhancing public recognition efforts, addressing intersectionality, and incorporating environmental justice into the framework would elevate the city's efforts towards higher levels of reparative planning.

The State of California – Bruce's Beach:

The case of Bruce's Beach in California rates as a **4 - Substantial Action** on the ERE scale.

The return of the land to the Bruce family descendants and the public acknowledgment by Governor Newsom mark significant steps towards reparative justice. This initiative addresses both material redistribution and environmental justice.

While the return of Bruce's Beach is a landmark case in the history of reparative justice, it also highlights the complexities of addressing historical wrongs through material restitution alone. The case serves as a symbolic victory, but its long-term impact on the broader Black community in California remains uncertain. Such high-profile cases could overshadow the need for broader, more systemic reparative actions across the state. However, to achieve full enactment of reparations, continued efforts to build sustainable and democratic community structures and ensure comprehensive social and spatial transformation are essential. To capitalize on this progress, California must ensure that similar initiatives are not confined to individual cases but form part of a more extensive, statewide endeavor to confront historical injustices.

Recommendation: California should continue to develop its reparative initiatives with a stronger emphasis on social and spatial transformation, cultural initiatives, and environmental justice. This could encompass implementing policies aimed at fostering affordable housing, promoting educational equity, and creating economic opportunities for Black communities, thereby ensuring the complete realization of the principles of reparative planning. Building sustainable community structures and ensuring comprehensive support for the descendants would enhance the state's efforts.

Georgetown University and The Jesuits:

Georgetown University's reparative actions rate as a **3 - Moderate Action** on the ERE scale.

Georgetown's reparative efforts are commendable, particularly in their willingness to confront their historical ties to slavery openly. The university and the Jesuits have made significant financial pledges and initiated various support measures for the descendants of enslaved individuals. While these efforts indicate meaningful progress in public recognition and material redistribution, the overall impact on social and spatial transformation within the university and the broader community is limited.

Granted, the university's actions could be perceived as primarily benefiting its public image rather than genuinely transforming the systemic inequities faced by the descendants of enslaved individuals. The initiatives need to move beyond financial compensation and address the deeper, structural changes necessary to dismantle ongoing racial inequities within the institution itself. This involves a comprehensive review of the university's curriculum, admission policies, and employment practices to ensure they align with the principles of reparative planning. Georgetown needs to further develop initiatives that address the full spectrum of reparative justice principles, including fostering environments for Black joy and economic democracy, to achieve a higher rating.

Recommendation: Georgetown University and the Jesuits should continue to expand their reparative initiatives with a stronger emphasis on social and spatial transformation, cultural initiatives, and environmental justice. Georgetown University could take a more active role in promoting these efforts within the broader Jesuit network, encouraging similar initiatives at other institutions with historical ties to slavery. Developing sustainable community structures and ensuring comprehensive support for the descendants would enhance their efforts towards higher levels of reparative justice.

Gap In Practice

While the reparations program addresses specific historical injustices, it should also consider broader community environmental justice issues. This includes tackling systemic issues such as access to clean water, exposure to industrial pollutants, and the availability of green spaces. Williams and Steil's (2023) Reparative Planning Framework emphasizes how addressing these issues can help improve the overall quality of life for Black residents and other systemically marginalized communities.

Effective resolution of historical and systemic injustices against underserved communities requires a strong focus on reparations and reparative planning. It is essential to broaden the scope of discussions on the merging of reparative planning and environmental justice to include diverse viewpoints. Environmental justice ensures equitable allocation of environmental advantages and disadvantages, especially for communities unequally affected by environmental hazards due to racial and economic

inequalities (Chapman & Ahmed, 2022). Integrating environmental justice into reparative planning involves recognizing and rectifying the environmental damage inflicted on these communities, often worsened by discriminatory policies and practices.

For instance, climate change disproportionately impacts poor and vulnerable people in both low-income and high-income countries, with low-income countries suffering the worst impacts despite contributing negligibly to the problem (Chapman & Ahmed, 2022). Furthermore, Táíwò (2022) argues that climate justice and reparations are interlinked, as the wealth accumulated by wealthy nations through activities causing climate change has resulted in severe environmental and socioeconomic impacts on marginalized communities. Integrating environmental justice into reparative planning would rectify historical wrongs and ensure a healthier and more equitable future for these communities.

Environmental justice should be a more prominent feature in reparative planning approaches. Many reparative frameworks focus primarily on economic compensation and policy reforms without sufficiently addressing the environmental dimensions of injustice. This oversight fails to consider how environmental degradation and exposure to pollutants have long-term adverse effects on historically marginalized communities' health, well-being, and economic stability.

In discussion should be a comprehensive reparative approach that includes measures to remediate environmental damage and ensure that affected communities have access to clean air, water, and land (Pellow & Brulle, 2005). Chapman and Ahmed (2022) propose

the creation of a Global Climate Reparations Fund, linked with the United Nations Human Rights Council, to compensate for the damages inflicted by climate change on low-income countries. This approach accentuates the necessity of incorporating human rights principles into climate justice initiatives. We must also consider the direct support to grassroots organizations and frontline communities, again shifting the power of decision making to those affected directly.

By not incorporating environmental justice, reparative planning remains incomplete, missing an essential component of the lived experiences of those it aims to serve. Thus, a more integrated approach is necessary to address the multifaceted nature of historical injustices and promote true equity and justice.

Takeaway

Each case study demonstrates varying degrees of adherence to the reparative framework, with strengths and areas needing further development. A more integrated approach that includes comprehensive social, economic, and environmental justice measures is essential to fully address historical injustices and promote true equity and justice. **To reaffirm, the use of this scale is not a one-size-fits-all.** Reparative planning is an intentional and specific process that should consider all lived experiences.

Speculative Case Study on Boston, Including Black Immigrants and Black Undocumented Status

Envisioning Reparative Interventions for Black Communities in Boston

What is urban planning if not the intentional enactment of policies decorated with spatial designs? When we consider the historical context of urban planning practices tied in with the case study critique, we now understand what reparative planning can look like.

Seen in the advocacy of the case studies, we can begin to envision what a process of reparations looks like in a city like Boston, which has begun its own process of reparations with Mayor Michelle Wu's creation of a Reparations Taskforce (City of Boston, 2023).

Already being imagined and actualized through the actions of the Reparations Taskforce are a series of initiatives that are centering the experiences of Boston's African American community.

Racism and discrimination is not isolated to just African Americans but affects the wide diaspora of Black individuals that reside in the USA. The same system of oppression and exclusion affects them and their self-determination.

This speculative case study of Boston is a call to action that invites Mayor Wu and other mayors to consider reparations that for not only African Americans but other vulnerable Black communities within the U.S.

Dear Honorable Mayor Michelle Wu and Boston's Reparations Taskforce,

For the steps taken to create a Reparations Taskforce and the work that the Taskforce does we say thank you.

The reparative work being championed in Boston holds significant value to generations of Black communities that have been systemically marginalized.

A step to consider is exploring Mayors Organized for Reparations and Equity (MORE), which is a coalition of U.S. mayors committed to implementing reparations programs for African American residents in their cities (Landis, 2021). The collaborative nature of MORE allows mayors to exchange innovative ideas and effective strategies, enhancing their ability to implement meaningful reparations programs. These initiatives serve as crucial models for potential federal policies, highlighting the importance of local actions in shaping national reform.

Joining MORE is a vital and commendable step for any mayor dedicated to advancing social justice and economic equity within their city. Through participation in this

coalition, mayors exhibit strong leadership in addressing the historical injustices experienced by Black and African American communities while also playing an active role in developing effective, community-centered solutions, hence shifting decision-making power back to the community.

Centering Boston communities begins with exploring the historical context of urban planning practices in Boston. This history has revealed a legacy of policies and decisions that have entrenched racial and economic disparities, disproportionately affecting Black immigrants and undocumented Black communities (Grengs, 2002). At this point we know that these practices, while reflective of broader national urban trends, have unique and profound implications within Boston's socio-political landscape.

It was during the mid-20th century, urban renewal initiatives in Boston, such as the infamous razing of the West End (Boston Housing Authority, 1953), exemplified a systemic disregard for the socio-economic fabric of predominantly Black and immigrant neighborhoods. The demolition of the West End in the 1950s, seemingly to pave the way for commercial development, resulted in the displacement of thousands of residents, including Black immigrants, without adequate compensation or relocation assistance (Bailey, 1993). This set a precedent for future urban renewal projects in areas like Roxbury, where the interests of influential institutional stakeholders are consistently prioritized over those of local, often marginalized, residents (Jennings, 2004).

The ramifications of these urban planning strategies on Black immigrant and undocumented communities have been extensive and multifaceted. Gentrification and the prioritization of high-end developments over affordable housing have exacerbated housing insecurity, pushing these populations into substandard living conditions or forcing frequent relocations in pursuit of affordable rents (Grengs, 2002). The economic marginalization of these communities makes this dynamic even more complex, as urban economic strategies have favored large corporate entities over local small businesses, thereby constraining economic opportunities and perpetuating unemployment and underemployment among Black immigrants (Ranney & Betancur, 1992).

The displacement caused by these urban planning practices has significantly disrupted the social cohesion within Black immigrant communities. The destruction of established neighborhoods and the resultant scattering of long-standing residents dismantles critical social networks and community support systems (Bailey, 1993). This disruption is particularly detrimental to undocumented individuals, who rely heavily on these networks for socio-economic stability and protection in the face of precarious legal statuses (Jennings, 2004). The instability caused by frequent relocations also adversely affects the educational attainment of children and the overall health of families, thereby perpetuating cycles of poverty and social marginalization.

We can now piece together how the legacy of inequitable urban planning in Boston has perpetuated housing instability, economic disenfranchisement, and social fragmentation among Black immigrant and undocumented communities. To mitigate these impacts, there is a pressing need for a paradigmatic shift towards more inclusive and equitable

urban planning frameworks that foreground the needs and voices of these historically marginalized populations.

We urge you to include the diverse experiences of Boston's Black communities in your work on reparations.

Foundation of the Reparative Planning Process

Centering Black Bodies

The reparative planning process in Boston is grounded in acknowledging and addressing historical injustices and systemic inequalities faced by Black communities.

The primary components include:

- **Historical Recognition:** Acknowledging the city's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade and systemic racism. This involves public apologies, educational reforms, and memorials to honor the contributions and sufferings of Black individuals (Feagin, 2010).
- **Economic Compensation:** Providing financial reparations to descendants of enslaved people and those affected by systemic racism. This includes direct payments, investment in Black-owned businesses, and economic development programs in Black neighborhoods (Darity & Mullen, 2020).
- **Educational Equity:** Ensuring access to quality education and addressing disparities in educational attainment. Initiatives include scholarship programs,

funding for historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), and curricula reforms to include Black histories and contributions (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

- **Health and Well-being:** Addressing health disparities and providing comprehensive healthcare services. Investments in healthcare infrastructure in Black communities, culturally competent care, and mental health support are essential (Williams & Mohammed, 2013).

Inclusion of Black Immigrant and Undocumented Communities

Protective and Preservative Approaches

Organizations like the UndocuBlack Network and Embrace Boston focus on protecting and preserving the rights and well-being of Black immigrant and undocumented communities. Their approaches include:

- **Advocacy and Policy Change:** Lobbying for inclusive immigration policies that consider the unique challenges faced by Black immigrants. This includes pushing for legal reforms and protections against deportation and discrimination (Johnson, 2016).
- **Community Support Services:** Providing legal assistance, mental health services, and educational resources tailored to the needs of Black immigrant and undocumented communities. These services aim to ensure access to rights and opportunities (UndocuBlack Network, 2024).

- **Cultural Preservation:** Supporting cultural events, language preservation, and community-based organizations that celebrate Black immigrant cultures. This ensures that cultural practices and identities are preserved and respected within the broader Black community (Kasinitz, 1992).

Enlisting these measures will act as a pathway to prevent the marginalization of vulnerable communities within a vulnerable community.

Potential Outcomes

Fostering reparations with Black immigrants and Black undocumented people in mind feeds back into the socio-economic make up of Black communities. These intentional by-products include:

- **Inclusive Economic Growth:** Black immigrant and undocumented communities experience economic growth through targeted job training programs, entrepreneurship support, and equitable access to capital.
- **Improved Health and Well-being:** Comprehensive health and wellness programs significantly improve the health and well-being of Black immigrant communities, reducing disparities and increasing life expectancy.
- **Cultural Resilience:** Cultural preservation initiatives ensure that Black immigrant cultures are celebrated and integrated into the broader community, fostering a sense of belonging and identity.

- **Legal and Social Protections:** Strong legal protections and advocacy efforts reduce instances of discrimination and exploitation, ensuring that Black immigrant and undocumented individuals can live without fear and access their rights fully.
- **Educational Attainment:** Increased access to quality education and scholarships results in higher educational attainment and opportunities for Black immigrant youth, contributing to long-term socio-economic stability.

Sustainable Pathways of Reparations

To develop sustainable pathways of reparations that include Black immigrant and undocumented communities, the following steps are proposed:

- **Intersectional Frameworks:** Utilize intersectional frameworks to address the multiple layers of oppression Black immigrant and undocumented communities face. Understand how race, immigration status, and other factors intersect to impact these individuals' lives (Crenshaw, 1989).
- **Economic Opportunities:** Create economic opportunities through job training programs, entrepreneurship support, and access to capital for Black immigrant and undocumented communities. This aims to empower these individuals economically and reduce disparities (Shierholz, 2014).
- **Legal Protections:** Advocate for legal protections that prevent discrimination and exploitation of Black immigrants and undocumented individuals. Ensure

access to legal representation and challenge unjust laws and practices (Johnson, 2016).

- **Health and Wellness Programs:** Implement health and wellness programs that address the specific needs of Black immigrant and undocumented communities. This includes providing culturally competent healthcare services and mental health support (Williams & Mohammed, 2013).
- **Community-led Initiatives:** Support community-led initiatives that foster resilience and empowerment. This includes funding grassroots organizations, cultural preservation projects, and community-building activities (UndocuBlack Network, 2024).

Takeaway

By using the ERE scale and learning from organizations like the UndocuBlack Network and Embrace Boston, the City of Boston can develop inclusive and sustainable reparative interventions. This speculative scenario envisions a future where all Black communities, including immigrants and undocumented individuals, are empowered and thriving, reflecting the city's commitment to equity, restoration, and empowerment.

Conclusion

In the quest for reparations through reparative planning, we confront a profound challenge: to reshape urban planning from a tool of systemic oppression into an instrument of equity and healing. The historical roots of urban planning in the United States are steeped in exclusion, exploitation, and marginalization, particularly of Black and vulnerable communities. As we navigate this complex terrain, it is crucial to reflect on how reparative planning approaches are emerging and evolving.

The practice of reparations enacted through reparative planning is gaining traction in real-time across various cities in the U.S., marked by innovative pilot projects and community-driven initiatives. These emerging practices reflect a growing recognition of the need to address historical injustices and systemic inequalities. For instance, cities like Evanston, Illinois, have begun implementing reparative measures to address the long-standing effects of discriminatory housing policies. By evaluating these initiatives through detailed case studies, we can observe how these efforts are being translated into practical, actionable solutions.

The assessment of reparative planning cases using the Extent of Reparative Efforts (ERE) scale provides a valuable framework for measuring the impact and effectiveness of these initiatives. The ERE scale categorizes reparative efforts into various levels, from none to full enactment, allowing for a nuanced evaluation of how well different programs are addressing historical wrongs. This scale helps in understanding the

current state of reparations and advocates for a more systematic approach to assessing and enhancing reparative planning efforts.

The landscape for reparative planning is developing, as there is a growing recognition of its significance and the planners' role in driving these transformations. Planners wield the power to influence policies and champion fairness, highlighting their pivotal contribution to propelling forward reparative efforts. This is why including the intersections of Black experiences is paramount to prevent community-wide marginalization.

We cannot fail to understand or neglect the experiences of Black immigrant and Black undocumented communities, who are prey to the same systems that have and continue to marginalize African Americans. The reparations and reparative measures developed by City of Boston's Reparations Taskforces should include the large Black immigrant enclaves of the city.

As we look to the future, further research is needed to refine reparative planning frameworks, evaluate their effectiveness, and explore new approaches to addressing systemic inequalities. This thesis hopes to advance the urban planning field and ensure that reparative planning fulfills its promise of justice and equity by offering the Extent of Reparations Enacted Table, coupled with continuous engagement with community stakeholders, rigorous analysis of emerging practices, and the application of innovative evaluation tools.

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