

Report of the Restorative Justice Commission

The Way Forward Towards Restorative Justice in College Park

(September 2025)

Summary

This document represents the City of College Park's Restorative Justice Commission recommendations for redress for governmental actions which harmed the residents of the Lakeland community during the period of urban renewal.

This document is organized based on the five essential elements for reparations outlined by the United Nations: Restitution, Compensation, Rehabilitation, Satisfaction, and Guarantees of Non-Repetition.

This document calls on the City of College Park (Maryland), Prince George's County, Prince George's County Public Schools, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the state of Maryland, including the University of Maryland, to work individually or collectively to address the harms through specific actions.

1. Restitution
 - a. Create designation of "Lakeland Legacy Member". These will be the primary recipients of the reparative measures. Establish Lakeland Legacy Council to provide decision making on behalf of Lakeland Legacy Members.
 - b. Assure homeowners receive fair market real estate value of land purchased by public entities during urban renewal
 - c. Re-establish visual and physical connection to the lake
 - d. Return Lakelanders to Lakeland as homeowners and businessowners
 - i. Adopt Right of First Refusal policies for real estate within the Lakeland Urban Renewal District
 - ii. Construct new homes, businesses and home-based businesses in Lakeland
 - iii. Continue current programs and establish new initiatives which increase owner occupancy of homes. Establish the "Return to Lakeland Program"
 - iv. Permit the construction of auxiliary dwelling units within Lakeland
 - e. Establish cultural, historical, and educational institutions in Lakeland
 - f. Improve access to public transportation

- g. Protect the environment in Lakeland
- 2. Compensation
 - a. Compensation for forced displacement of individuals from Lakeland during the period of 1969-1981
 - b. Compensation for community disruption through the establishment of the Lakeland Legacy Scholars program offering free tuition to Lakeland Legacy Members
- 3. Rehabilitation
 - a. Establishment and continuation of community based supplemental education programs within the Lakeland community
- 4. Satisfaction
 - a. Memorialize harm in physical locations in Lakeland (including but not limited to Pierce Avenue site and Lakeland school site)
 - b. Memorialize commitment to repair through visual representation of Resolution 20R16
 - c. Ensure truth disclosure through the Lakeland Community Heritage Project and the Lakeland Digital Archive as they continue to document and share stories of Lakeland.
 - d. Ensure truth disclosure by supporting additional restorative justice research
- 5. Guarantees of Non-Repetition
 - a. Support the preservation and official designation of Lakeland sites of community significance including Lakeland High School, First Baptist Church and Embry AME Church.
 - b. Establish a new Historic Preservation recognition of “Cultural Resource Community” and designate Lakeland as a Cultural Resource Community
 - c. Establish a Lakeland Land Trust
 - d. Adopt the Lakeland Neighborhood Plan

In addition this document outlines ideas for funding these actions and establishes the new charge of the Restorative Justice Commission.

Introduction

The College Park’s Restorative Justice Commission extends its thanks to our Mayor and City Council for their confidence in entrusting us to take on a critical role in the process of achieving restorative justice for Lakelanders. We are grateful for your guidance and support as well as your investment in the work by the African American Redress Network, Braxton Institute, Lakeland Community Heritage Project, Lakeland Civic Association, Embry African Methodist

Episcopal Church, the First Baptist Church, and the Washington Brazilian Seventh Day Adventist Church.

This document represents commission recommendations for redress for governmental actions which harmed the residents of the Lakeland community during the period of urban renewal. The 1969, College Park, Lakeland Urban Renewal Area, Part 1 Application for Loan and Grant, describes the community as housing 65 families (13 white and 52 nonwhite) as well as 9 individuals (7 white and 2 nonwhite). Project documents divided Lakeland into three divisions: clearance area east, clearance area west and the conservation area. The outcome of urban renewal was the displacement of the majority of Lakelanders, and the destruction of homes and businesses in the clearance areas. Today clearance area east is a public park while clearance area west is nearly exclusively rental housing.

The urban renewal project impacted the whole city, but that impact was uneven. All City of College Park residents benefited from an increased tax base due to the new development. The metropolitan area expanded its public transportation system at a reduced cost, due to mined gravel from Lakeland used to build the new Green Line. The region got a new elementary school (Paint Branch Elementary School for Prince George's County Public School [PGCPS]), a community center (College Park Community Center), and extensive park land (Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission [MNCPPC]). The University of Maryland gained housing for its students. Leon Weiner and Associates gained generations of profits from residential rental units developed under very favorable terms skewed for them. By comparison Lakelanders, surrounded by racially hostile communities, lost their homes, their businesses, their racially safe community, and their way of life built over generations; a community was decimated.

The multi-faceted harm to Lakelanders was created by several entities. It is far reaching and enduring. Repair will need those same qualities. While joint responsibilities exist, this does not diminish the obligation for action by each individual entity.

While it is impossible to turn back the clock, The United Nations, in its "Basic Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Remedy and Reparation for Victims of Gross Violations of International Human Rights Law and Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law," outlines five essential elements for reparations:

1. Restitution: Restoring the victim to the state they were in before the violation, which can include regaining liberty, family life, citizenship, employment, or property.

2. Compensation: Providing payment for economic damages resulting from the violations, such as physical or mental harm, lost opportunities, and the cost of services. Compensation should reflect the severity of the violation and harm.
3. Rehabilitation: Offering medical, psychological, legal, and social support to help victims recover, including vocational training and education for integration.
4. Satisfaction: Measures addressing moral harm, including cessation of ongoing violations, truth disclosure, finding disappeared persons, restoring dignity through declarations or decisions, public apologies, sanctions, and commemoration.
5. Guarantees of Non-Repetition: Implementing reforms to prevent future violations, such as civilian oversight of security forces, strengthening the judiciary, protecting human rights workers, and promoting human rights standards.

Recommendations

1. Restitution: *Restoring the victim to the state they were in before the violation, which can include regaining liberty, family life, citizenship, employment, or property.*

Create designation of “Lakeland Legacy Members”

As a restorative measure the City of College Park will create a new designation of Lakeland Legacy Members to provide recognition to Lakelanders who suffered harm from urban renewal. This group and their descendants will be designated as the primary recipients of restorative measures.

To hold the designation of Lakeland Legacy Member, individuals must have been residents of Lakeland for at least 10 years during the period 1969 to 1981, or be a direct descendant of one such resident. Individuals will be required to claim and prove their status during 2026. New direct descendants of those members may be added to this group by a registered member.

The City of College Park will work collaboratively with the Lakeland Community Heritage Project to compile and maintain the list of Lakeland Legacy Members (an estimate of the number could be projected from the 65 families and their descendants). Lakeland Legacy Members will elect a five member Lakeland Legacy Council. Council members will serve two-year terms. They will represent Lakeland Legacy Members and make decisions on their behalf.

Assuring Fair Market Real Estate Sales

This action seeks to address anticipated generational wealth that was lost. Research has not yet revealed extensive documentation of the actual sales price of properties, but most are recorded at a sales price of \$10. Oral history indicates that Lakelanders felt strongly that the amount paid was less than fair market value. The City of College Park is called upon to further investigate this matter to determine any difference between fair market value and the verifiable

sales price. If no other information is found in a period of 3 years about the sales price, then the sales price of 10\$ will be judged to be true.

As a restorative measure for the inadequate compensation for Lakeland real estate during urban renewal, the public purchaser of real estate in Lakeland (Prince George's County Public Schools, City of College Park, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission) during the period 1969 to 1981 are called upon to provide restitution to Lakeland Legacy Members, or their descendants, for the value difference between the verifiable sales price and fair market value at the time of sale and appreciation on the money. The City of College Park is called upon to work with the Lakeland Legacy Council and financial experts to arrive at an appropriate calculation method.

Return Access to Lakeland's Lake

As a reparative measure for the displacement and separation of Lakelanders from contact with the healing connection of their lake, the City of College Park, Maryland, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, working independently or collectively, are called upon to re-establish visual and physical connection to the lake from Lakeland.

- Visual connection: Establish visual access from Lakeland to the lake in consultation with and with the approval of the Lakeland Legacy Council. One possibility includes creating visual access from 54th and Navahoe Street to 54th and Pierce Avenue through the replacement of the current wall with a safety barrier which permits visual connection to the lake.
- Physical connection: The City of College Park, Maryland, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, working independently or collectively, are called upon to re-establish safe physical access from 54th Avenue to the lake in a fashion approved by the Lakeland Legacy Council.

Returning Legacy Lakelanders to Lakeland

As a restorative measure for the removal of residents, homes, home based businesses and community commercial establishments the City of College Park, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and Prince George's County collectively and independently are called upon to return Lakelanders to their original condition as homeowners and business owners in Lakeland.

There are a number of measures to be taken toward this goal:

1. Work with all appropriate entities to adopt Right of First Refusal policies for real estate within the Lakeland Urban Renewal District. This agreement will be made part of the Maryland Land Record for each property. This will require appropriate legislation.

- Publicly owned properties within Lakeland shall be offered for purchase at their urban renewal recorded purchase price. This right will have the following ranked beneficiaries, with the exception that any Lakeland Legacy Member can sell or give the property to the local land trust.
 - 1. Displaced Lakeland Legacy Member who is the prior owner of the property or the descendant of the prior property owner.
 - 2. Displaced Lakeland Legacy Member and their descendants
 - 3. Lakeland Legacy Member
 - 4. A designated local land trust
- Right of First Refusal for privately owned property offered for sale in Lakeland with ranked beneficiaries
 - 1. Current resident
 - 2. Displaced Lakeland Legacy Member and their descendants
 - 3. Lakeland Legacy Member
 - 4. A designated local land trust
 - 5. City of College Park, Maryland
 - 6. Prince George's County
 - 7. Affordable Housing Organizations approved by Lakeland Legacy Council

Should the Right of First Refusal not be in place or not actionable when any Lakeland property becomes available for sale, then the City of College Park and Prince George's County are called upon to do everything in their power to ensure the property is sold in alignment with the hierarchy outlined in this document.

If the Lakeland Legacy Member receives the benefit of compensation (outlined above) for a property then any re-purchase of that family property through the Right of Refusal will be at the negotiated present day price.

2. Construct new homes and support home-based businesses and businesses in Lakeland

As a restorative measure for the removal of affordable homes, home-based businesses and community commercial establishments, entities that caused that harm are called to take reparative action.

- The City of College Park, Maryland is called upon to build single family homes with facilities for a home based business at the 5021 Lakeland Road site. This will be made available as an ownership opportunity for Legacy Lakeland Members who meet all necessary criteria to establish such businesses.
- The City of College Park and Prince George's County are called upon to establish policies, projects and programs which foster, support and erect home based businesses.

- The University of Maryland is called upon to provide support to business development and other education programs within Lakeland for Lakeland Legacy Members.
- The City of College Park, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and Prince George's County are called upon to support in every way possible the maintenance and creation of affordable housing within the Lakeland community in alignment with the Lakeland neighborhood plan. This must include the conversion of available sites to that use and neighborhood commercial uses, as identified by the Lakeland Neighborhood Plan. Sites identified should they become available include Paint Branch Elementary School, Lakeland College Park Community Center and Youth Sports Complex, and the Historic Lakeland High School Site. (Lakeland Neighborhood Plan, Chapter 4, Community Projects.)
- Private investors who gained profit from participation in land acquisition and development during the urban renewal process at the expense of the community of Lakeland are called on to participate in a process of acknowledgment of the harm done and take action to make repair.

3. The City of College Park and Prince George's County are called upon to continue current programs and establish new initiatives which increase owner occupancy of homes within Lakeland. The goal of these efforts is to move from the current published level of 40% owner occupancy to reach the statewide average level of 71%.

- Establish and support a "Return to Lakeland program" for the benefit of Lakeland Legacy Members (residents of Lakeland between 1969 and 1981 and their descendants). It will support both residences and businesses. The program's goal will be the re-establishment, establishment, or retention of Lakeland Legacy Members residences or commercial enterprises in Lakeland. This program will remain in place for 56 years (2025-1969 = 56). The program will be initiated in the calendar year 2026 with the convening of a working group which will include Lakeland Legacy Members and real estate and finance professionals. They will present the Mayor and Council with a proposal for the program's design and constitute the initial program advisory group.

4. Permit the construction of auxiliary dwelling units within Lakeland

- Traditionally Lakelanders utilized auxiliary dwelling units as a method of meeting the housing needs for their extended families. To restore multigenerational housing utilizing auxiliary dwellings M-NCPPC, Prince George's County and the City of College Park are called upon to institute an Auxiliary Dwelling Unit Program in Lakeland. The auxiliary dwelling units can only be used for purposes in line with the Lakeland neighborhood plan. This will allow Lakeland residents of owner-occupied properties to construct and utilize auxiliary dwelling units on their property. An onsite resident homeowner will be required for the establishment

and continuation of this use. Changes to the implementation of the ADU Program in Lakeland may be made by Lakeland Legacy Council.

Establish Cultural, Historical, and Educational Institutions in Lakeland

The City of College Park, University of Maryland, WMATA, and M-NCPPC are called upon to work together to establish, support, and maintain a community based cultural, historical and educational institution housed in the historic Lakeland High School site. Conversations have begun about this shared use of the space. Vocational Education, Business Development, K-12 academic remediation, wellness, personal finance, arts and local history will be among the institution's areas of concentration. Development of the institution should be initiated in the calendar year 2026 with its first programming and the convening of a working group which will include Lakeland Legacy Members, their chosen representatives and finance professionals. They will present the Mayor and Council and Lakeland Legacy Council with a proposal for the institution's structure, potential programming and financing.

As a reparative measure for the dismantling of the Lakeland community:

The City of College Park, Prince George's County and the State of Maryland are asked to designate Lakeland a community of priority for reparative investment of resources in alignment with this reparative plan. Lakeland is within an area designated as a [Just Community](#), which should give Lakeland priority access to various Maryland Department of Housing and Development grants. The City of College Park, Prince George's County and the State of Maryland are asked to figure out the details of the program and use it to optimize its benefit for the actualization of Lakeland's repair.

The City of College Park and Prince George's County are called upon to adopt the Lakeland Neighborhood Plan with the amendments noted in this document as an official planning, development, and policy making tool.

Improve Access to Public Transportation

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority is called upon to create a Lakeland Legacy pass to provide free transportation within the WMATA system to Lakeland Legacy Members for the period of 20 years as recognition of the cost of the Green Line, paid by generations of Lakelanders.

The City of College Park, University of Maryland, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority are called upon to create programs which serve the needs of Lakeland residents and Lakeland Legacy members. This should be carried out using surveys by the University of Maryland Department of Transportation Services of current Lakeland residents and Lakeland Legacy Members in order to discover their transportation needs. Based on their findings the University of Maryland, WMATA, and the City of College Park are called upon to create initiatives and advocate for changes necessary to meet those needs.

- Move bus stops for UM Shuttle and WMATA to increase access for Lakelanders if supported by the survey of transportation needs.
- The City of College Park and Prince George's County are called upon to create last mile transportation programs for current Lakeland residents and Lakeland Legacy Members to facilitate the use of mass transit if supported by the survey of transportation needs.

Protect the environment in Lakeland

Establish Lakeland as the pilot site for city sustainability and climate resilience programs such as the development of a Solar Energy Program and burying the power lines. Participation in any program will require approval from the Lakeland Legacy Council.

2. Compensation: *Providing payment for economic damages resulting from the violations, such as physical or mental harm, lost opportunities, and the cost of services.*

Compensation for Forced Displacement*: payment to heads of households displaced by government action between 1969 to 1981

Compensation by the City of College Park to heads of households displaced by government action during the period 1969 to 1981 in the amount of \$1000 in 1975 dollars plus interest. Amounts to be paid will be determined by adding inflation and interest based on the average annual mortgage interest rate, from the recorded purchase date until compensation payment is complete. To be eligible for this program recipients must be Lakeland Legacy Members. In the case of the demise of the individual who was displaced, their descendants may receive the funds.

Compensation for Community Disruption: establish Lakeland Legacy Scholars Program

To compensate for benefits provided to the University of Maryland at the expense of Lakelanders the University of Maryland System is called upon to establish a Lakeland Legacy Scholars program for Lakeland Legacy Members. Lakeland Legacy Members would be provided free tuition at Maryland public universities and colleges with a stipend equal to the prevailing pay rate for 20 hours a week. Recipients would provide services for community based programs for the benefit of Lakelanders during their graduate or undergraduate studies.

*The interest rate is calculated at the average rate of return of the S&P500 over the last 50 years. The compensation is payable in cash over a set term or through tax credits. Funds payable to Lakeland Legacy Members may be paid over the course of multiple years and may be pooled at the request of the recipient family's designation.

3. Rehabilitation: *Offering medical, psychological, legal, and social support to help victims recover, including vocational training and education for integration.*

Education

The City of College Park, University of Maryland, Prince George's County Public Schools and Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission are called upon to act independently and collectively to provide foundational support for the establishment and continuation of community-based supplemental education programs within the Lakeland community (part of the cultural, historical and educational institution under the "Restitution" section above). This will serve Lakeland residents and Lakeland Legacy Members with programs including but not limited to K-12 education, vocational education, life skills and cultural education. These programs will come under the umbrella of a new Lakeland-centered institution using the University of Orange as one of the guiding models.

4. Satisfaction: *Offering medical, psychological, legal, and social support to help victims recover, including vocational training and education for integration.*

The City of College Park, Maryland-National Capitol Parks and Planning Commission, Prince George's County, Prince George's County Public Schools, and the University of Maryland are called upon to act independently and collectively to work toward satisfaction for the harm delivered to Lakelanders through memorialization and continued truth disclosure.

Memorialization at Pierce Avenue site in Lakeland. The RJC and the City of College Park have a commitment to develop a plan for the Pierce Avenue site to memorialize the harm of urban renewal and create an engaging community space that physically shows the City of College Park's commitment to repair for Lakeland. This does not exclude additional physical commemoration of Lakeland stories.

Memorialization at Lakeland High School. Establish the building as a living and working instrument of repair that serves in the areas of education, housing, entrepreneurship and traditional memorialization. (Lakeland Neighborhood Plan, Chapter 4, Community Projects)

Memorialization through the public display of a visual representation (text of the resolution, art work, etc.) of Resolution 20R16 in a prominent and permanent location at the City of College Park's primary physical location (such as College Park City Hall). The representation would require approval of the Lakeland Legacy Council.

Ensure truth disclosure by supporting the work of the Lakeland Community Heritage Project and the Lakeland Digital Archive as they continue to document and share stories of Lakeland.

Ensure truth disclosure by supporting additional research related to restorative justice for two additional years by the equivalent of three University of Maryland researchers (half time equivalent, 20 hours/week) each year to:

- Digitize and make available through the Lakeland Digital Archive all urban renewal records held by the City of College Park.

- Document the compensation amounts for properties purchased by Prince George's County Public Schools, Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission and the City of College Park during the period 1969 through 1981.
- Document the roles of state, federal government (including HUD and others) and private parties in the harms from urban renewal and associated actions impacting Lakelanders.
- Document the investments and profits made by private investors in Lakeland property during urban renewal.
- Establish a roster of Lakeland Legacy Members

5. Guarantees of Non-Repetition: *Implementing reforms to prevent future violations, such as civilian oversight of security forces, strengthening the judiciary, protecting human rights workers, and promoting human rights standards.*

The city of College Park is recognized for the repeal of urban renewal program language from city code. At the city's recommendation the name of the College Park Community Center and Lake Artemesia were changed to Lakeland College Park Community Center and Lake Artemesia Natural Area at Lakeland.

Preservation of Lakeland sites of community significance

The City of College Park, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, and Prince George's County are called upon to support the preservation and official designation of Lakeland sites of community significance including Lakeland High School, First Baptist Church and Embry AME Church.

Historic Designation as a Cultural Resource Community

The City of College Park, Maryland, and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission are called upon to:

1. Establish a **new** Historic Preservation recognition of Cultural Resource Community with the City, County and State providing similar benefits as a Historic District with fewer requirements to land owners and without the requirement to gain consent from property owners. This concept has been under discussion with members of the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission. Recommendations concerning the proposed project would be made on that basis.

2. Recognize Lakeland as a Cultural Resource Community.

Lakeland Land Trust

The City of College Park, Maryland, University of Maryland, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority are called upon to financially and substantively support the founding, funding, development and success of a Lakeland Land Trust. Lakeland Legacy Members will hold a controlling interest in the trust. The mission of the trust will be the strengthening of the Lakeland community through neighborhood stabilization achieved through the creation and maintenance of cultural and educational opportunities, affordable housing, neighborhood commercial opportunities and related facilities within the Lakeland community, in accordance with the Lakeland neighborhood plan. Key sites identified for ownership by the trust include lots on the west side of Rhode Island Avenue and the Lakeland High School Site.

Adoption of the Lakeland Neighborhood Plan with the changes in the Proposal consistent with this report including the institution of an underlying zone of RSF-65 for Paint Branch Elementary School, and the Lakeland College Park Community Center and Youth Sports Complex. This will facilitate the site's redevelopment consistent with the adjoining community. (Lakeland Neighborhood Plan, Chapter 4, Proposed Land Use and Zoning).

Funding and Support

Harm was created by a variety of entities and the benefits of those actions have been conveyed to multiple groups. These groups are called upon to provide substantive financial support to finance the repair of the harms. Today the city realizes \$137,167 annually in taxes for the area known as Lakeland, clearance area west. In 2027 that income is expected to grow to \$579,760 (primarily the result of the new Rambler development). It is reasonable to look to this income as a one of a number of sources of funding for reparative action for this community. Other responsible entities will be encouraged to make similar financial obligations. We call upon other responsible taxing authorities (M-NCPPC and Prince George's County) to dedicate funding from those properties to reparative measures as well. Similarly, we call upon the consideration of funding from fees for residential and commercial rentals within a specific area or throughout the city. Obtaining external grants and other funding sources is also imperative.

The City of College Park, Prince George's County, University of Maryland, other municipalities, and other partners are called upon to enact and collectively advocate for legislation at all levels of government which will dedicate funding and other resources to actualize restorative justice. Among these possible initiatives would be the establishment of the Historic Preservation recognition of Cultural Resource Community, the establishment of funding sources such as local cannabis taxes, and a reparative trust funded by a modest bond.

City of College Park Restorative Justice Commission's New Charge

The mandate of the City of College Park's Restorative Justice Commission will be to advise and work with the Mayor and Council on the implementation of the reparative work recommended by the City. This will include advocacy for legislation associated with achieving the recommendations of the Mayor and Council, and the harnessing of resources, including through relevant sections noted in the above document.

Definitions

1. **Lakelander:** Any current or former resident of Lakeland.
2. **Legacy Lakelander:** Individual residents of Lakeland for at least 10 years during the period 1969 to 1981 or a direct descendant of one such person.
3. **Lakeland Legacy Member** - Individual residents of Lakeland for at least 10 years during the period 1969 to 1981, or be a direct descendant of one such resident. Individuals are required to claim and prove their status during 2026. New direct descendants of those members may be added to this group by a registered member.