

Executive Order 2022-4

February 28, 2022

Establishing the Providence Municipal Reparations Commission

WHEREAS, in May 2020 Mayor Elorza began convening with the African American Ambassadors Group (AAAG), comprised of faith leaders to serve as a direct line of communication between the community and the Administration to ensure equitable access to COVID-19-related care and resources; and

WHEREAS, the AAAG has since expanded, establishing subcommittees that provide African heritage and Indigenous people and allies the ability to make strategic recommendations to close racial equity gaps in related subgroups citywide; and

WHEREAS, on July 15, 2020, Mayor Elorza, joined by members of the AAAG and community members, enacted a community-driven Executive Order committing the City to a process of Truth, Reconciliation, and municipal Reparations for African heritage and Indigenous people in Providence; and

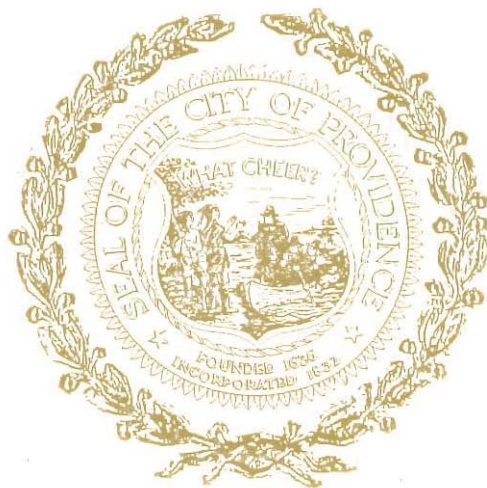
WHEREAS, the AAAG Truth-Telling Subgroup, in partnership with the Rhode Island Black Heritage Society and 1696 Heritage Group, examined and documented historical records outlining of the role of the City of Providence and State of Rhode Island in supporting a "Separate and Unequal" existence for African heritage and Indigenous people as a first step to the Truth, Reconciliation and Municipal Reparations Process, and unveiled A Matter of Truth on March 29, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the City and AAAG have undergone the Reconciliation phase, where residents, organizations and institutions were engaged in discussing these Truths, with the aim of appreciating the resiliency of the African heritage and Indigenous people in Providence and to better understand the ways these injustices continue to impact residents today; and

WHEREAS, the City recognizes the importance of recognizing the late former U.S. Representative John Conyers of Michigan who introduced the Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act (H. R. 40) repeatedly throughout his service in multiple sessions of Congress, and later introduced by U.S. Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, seeking to advance this legislation to establish a commission to study and develop reparation proposals; and

WHEREAS, the Truth and Reconciliation phases provide a framework to begin conversations regarding municipal reparations; and

WHEREAS, a Providence Municipal Reparations Commission will work to address the injuries outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation phases and provide clear recommendations to the City on appropriate policies, programs, and projects to begin repairing harm; and



WHEREAS, the City alone cannot address the full scope of harm committed by its institutions, state-level, federal, and private actors, and partnerships will need to be formed to do so.

NOW THEREFORE, do I, Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor of the City of Providence, order the following, effective immediately:

1. The Providence Municipal Reparations Commission is hereby created;
2. The Providence Municipal Reparations Commission would be chaired by Mayor Elorza or his designee;
3. The Providence Municipal Reparations Commission shall meet no less than twice per month and produce a report to the City within 90 days;
4. The Providence Municipal Reparations Commission shall include thirteen (13) members: (7) to be appointed by the Mayor and (6) to be appointed by the Providence City Council.
5. The Providence Municipal Reparations Commission will sunset following a report outlining recommendations on municipal reparations provided to Mayor Elorza and the Providence City Council;
6. The Providence Municipal Reparations Commission report shall include, but is not limited to: Recommendations on reparations, community engagement strategies throughout the process; and reparation work being done in other cities.

This executive order shall remain in full effect until it is repealed.

So Ordered:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jorge O. Elorza, *Mayor*