NYC CORE
Commission on Racial Equity

Progress Update: Title 34 of the New York City Administrative Code
NYC Study on Reparations and a Citywide Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation Plan

To: NYC Office of the Mayor and NYC City Council
From: Linda Tigani, Chair and Executive Director
Date: January 15, 2026

On behalf of the NYC Commission on Racial Equity (NYC CORE), and our partners, I am sharing a written update on our Commission's progress to advance Title 34 of the New York City Administrative Code (Racial Equity) requiring a NYC Study on Reparations and the development of a Citywide Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation Plan to be implemented in 2028. This update is required *by §34-201(c)(2) of Local Law 91*.

NYC CORE has developed a cohort-based engagement model to work with community partners, released a call for applications to identify and establish terms of engagement with community, continued discussions with experts in Truth and Reconciliation, developed a testimony guidebook, and has begun the development of curriculum to support organizations implementing community conversations that will inform the citywide Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation plan.

As always, it is important to note that several other cities have established Reparations efforts (taskforces, commissions, etc.) as well as Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation efforts, but few cities have established both efforts, and *no other cities to our knowledge* have designed these efforts to occur simultaneously. Additionally, NYC is the only municipality whereby the designated agency leading Reparations, Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation holds an accountability mandate towards city government, and is a permanent fixture of city government.

Achievements to date:

- ***$500,000.00 committed*** to community groups in 2026 to participate in a Reparations, Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation Network.
- ***900+ New Yorkers*** reached to date.
- ***200 organizations*** expressed interest in the Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation Network.
- ***15+ national experts*** provided guidance to NYC.
- ***30+ community developed values*** to guide Reparations, Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation work.
- ***400+ people*** in attendance across two of the first citywide gatherings on Reparations, Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation in the state's history.

Section I: Engagement of community stakeholders.

On November 19, 2025, NYC CORE partnered with Tyrik Washington of 4TE Capitol Solutions to celebrate the release of the first report on Reparations as well as release a call for organizations to apply to a Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation network. We received interest from 200 organizations, and we are currently reviewing applications.

Once accepted, 13 community organizations will receive up to $17,500 to participate in strategy sessions with NYC CORE, host community conversations yielding input on the early development of the citywide Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation plan, and collect truth testimony from their community. Funding will allow for each community member to receive an incentive for their time, ensure that each conversation has a facilitator, and ensure that participants are given refreshments at each conversation.

Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation Community Conversations are a key component of the work that network organizations will be asked to complete. NYC CORE is currently coordinating with Dr. Gail Christopher, a national expert on Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation, to develop a curriculum that will be used by partners. The curriculum is grounded in the following three-part structure: (1) community members creating a shared future vision and mission; (2) community members identifying what we need to do to get to the vision; and (3) community members outlining what "accountability" means during this time.

NYC CORE will also release a call for organizations to join a Reparations network. The Reparations network will function similarly to the Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation network, with 13 organizations receiving up to $20,000 to host community conversations to discuss the development of a Reparations study, gather truth testimony, and submit Reparations policy recommendations. The Reparations network will engage in an additional set of conversations with the Reparations research team.

To that end, NYC CORE will release a call for Reparations research teams to conduct the actual Reparations study. After the selection of the research team, NYC CORE will begin coordinating calls and workshops between the research team and the community organizations in the Reparations network.

Section II: Recommendations to NYC CORE from experts in the field

Input from both experts and community stakeholders is critical to the work that we do as a Commission. Accordingly, NYC CORE has engaged in numerous conversations with experts in Reparations, and Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation. Building on the insights shared in our first report, we have continued these engagements and now provide below six key considerations when designing Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation process, and other important considerations.

- **Consideration 1:** Meeting people where they are. Truth, and healing, is a constant process, and should occur in *all* places. Healing should not occur *exclusively* in government buildings – behind closed doors with little to no inclusion or transparency. This work requires community access, and as such NYC CORE has learned that we should be doing this work *in* community spaces. Extending beyond the location of where conversations will take place, we must also consider how the space feels and functions. Multiple experts articulated the need for safe spaces where individuals can share their stories in preparation for delivering official testimonies, and spaces intentionally designed to allow people to truly connect with and *hear* each other. Our intentionality will allow for community to build connective tissue that will counter any feelings of divisiveness, hostility, and disunity. Centering empathy in our design of community space will build communal understanding—a key to Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation.

- **Consideration 2:** Resourcing spaces for healing beyond this moment. Who enters a healing space is equal in importance to what resources are included in the *design* of the healing space to support emotional and psychological wellbeing. Community members must represent a diversity of racial and ethnic backgrounds, including white allies. Truth telling is heavy, emotionally taxing, and at times retraumatizing for communities harmed by racism and social injustice. A diverse set of community members provides opportunity to share the practice of healing across racial and ethnic groups, when requested and necessary. Creating space for people to self-determine their healing path, and providing the necessary resources is a strong start for individual and communal healing journeys. Experts encouraged us to ground our work in the belief that healing is an *ongoing* process. Chattel slavery, Jim Crow, and the legacies of these systems were perpetrated and perpetuated by our government, took place for several centuries, and continue to this day. Healing the massive and deep, systemically embedded trauma will take time. The Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation may begin the process for some, continue for others, but it will not completely heal the community. Systemic healing practices must be implemented for lasting change.

- **Consideration 3:** Vision-centered approach to healing—Centering Wholeness, not deficit. Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation community conversations and curriculum must utilize a "non-deficit" approach that emphasizes shared humanity to prevent "othering" and keep people involved in this process. Healing work must be incorporated in authentic narratives that bring about a vision for change. Developing a vision in community is healing, and that is especially true for communities holding anger or resentment for traumas inflicted and left unredressed. By creating a shared vision, as a first conversation,

NYC CORE can help community members develop a sense of group identity and allyship that will empower them and enable their lasting engagement in this work.

- **Consideration 4:** Our art & culture carries our truth. Cultural creations, such as art exhibits and performances, are critical to ensuring the success of Reparations, Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation work. Community members should work with NYC CORE to showcase visual art and performance art pieces that address a vision of what's possible and express the truth gathered in community testimony. Cultural analysis must extend beyond the city-level harms and highlight harms that occurred within specific neighborhoods that might have traditionally been overlooked.

- **Consideration 5:** Stories are evidence. The Black community has historically been required to meet a higher burden of proof when telling the truth regarding internal, interpersonal, institutional, and structural racism perpetrated and perpetuated by government. Experts advised us to collect stories that not only reflect intergenerational harm enacted on people, but to also collect stories and highlight how the harms *interact* on a micro and macro scale. We were advised to frame this work and our ask as "*tell me your story*" as opposed to "*give evidence*," noting that the phrasing to the public is critical and can influence the nature and quality of the testimony provided.

- **Consideration 6:** Accessible design and public engagement. The importance of the public perception of this work cannot be understated. Experts emphasized the report design must be digestible, popularized, disseminated, and advertised so that people can easily access and understand it. Findings should be easily utilized by community organizers who have long fought for Reparations, Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation. Community members who join in Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation gatherings may experience this work as a ceremony rather than a public meeting. If done with authenticity and intentionality, this work will provide a renewed sense of pride in cultural and racial identity and spiritual practices.

To be successful, we must look to the work of other Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation efforts both domestically and internationally. This work is not new, and experts advised us to learn from other efforts to incorporate best practices while avoiding the pitfalls that have served as obstacles for other efforts.

Section III: What's Next for NYC CORE

NYC CORE is engaging in a community driven fact-finding mission to uncover the truth of what happened in New York City. An important next step, NYC CORE will release a solicitation for a

Research team, which is required by law to be conducted by *persons "...who collectively have demonstrated expertise in the following subjects: constitutional law, New York state or municipal law, history, econometrics, international human rights law, urban planning, anthropology or sociology, and racial equity. To the extent feasible, such persons shall also have expertise in health, housing, banking and financial systems, taxation, criminal justice and policing, education, and collective or historical trauma.*" The research team will be selected within the next few months so that they can begin working with the Reparations network before the end of Fiscal Year 2026.

NYC CORE will continue partnering with Tyrik Washington of 4TE Capitol Solutions and Zeal Co-op to ensure that community drives this process through borough-based and citywide gatherings and a public education campaign. Reparations, Truth, Healing and Reconciliation campaigns will be designed to encourage understanding, awareness, and long-lasting engagement with this project. The public information campaign will speak to the diversity of New Yorkers across ages, backgrounds, and community leadership. We will continue to engage with experts across the nation to ensure our process is responsive to what community needs, and what experts advise.

Section IV: Conclusion

We must do this work so that we can begin to heal from the harms of the past that have bled into our present and threaten our future. The work of Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation will not stop until we see a better New York City – a New York that is engaging in healing from the traumas of the past, has ended current abuse, and is on the path of a racially equitable and just city for all.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report and for engaging with the timely and important work of Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation. The process is the product, and we hope that the knowledge of our progress can provide even a modicum of healing to New Yorkers. New Yorkers deserve Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation, and it is our mission to deliver with intentionality, and authenticity.

To stay updated on our Reparations, Truth, Healing, and Reconciliation work, as well as our other efforts around Racial Equity and Accountability, visit https://www.nyc.gov/CORE and follow us on our social media accounts @RacialEquityNYC.