



COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND

Lakeland: Honoring the Past, Building the Future

Restorative Justice for College Park's Historic African American Community

“

*... it's a warm, beautiful community with
warm, beautiful people.*

Shirley Queen Robinson

For over 100 years, Lakeland stood as a testament to
Black self-determination, community, and resilience.

A Community Built to Last: Lakeland's History

125+ YEARS OF RESILIENCE · COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND



1890s

Developer Edwin Newman plans a white resort community; flooding presents challenges to structures built, making it economically difficult to sell to white buyers.



1920s – 1960s

Lakeland flourishes: churches, civic clubs, local businesses, community schools, and homes built with pride. Residents work at the University of Maryland.



2020 – Present

City formally apologizes (Resolution 20R16); Restorative Justice Commission established 2022; Harm Report released 2025; reparative recommendations issued.



1900s

African American families begin purchasing land. John C. Johnson founds the first school and First Baptist Church — a self-sustaining town is born.



1969 – 1981

Urban renewal begins. College Park and federal HUD funding displace 104 of 150 households; **75% of owner-occupied Black homes were bulldozed.**

COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK

The **Five Pillars** of Lakeland's Beloved Community

Social psychiatrist Dr. Mindy Fullilove identified these five pillars as all necessary components of a healthy urban habitat — all thriving in Lakeland before urban renewal.



01

PILLAR ONE

Housing

Affordable homes built with character and style, often by residents' own hands; multi-generational families owning land and building wealth.



02

PILLAR TWO

Learning

Culturally excellent schools where Black children thrived; youth organizations transmitting values and leadership skills from elders to generations.



03

PILLAR THREE

Gathering

Vibrant churches, civic clubs, and outdoor spaces for picnics, community events, and celebration — enduring spaces of belonging and shared joy.



04

PILLAR FOUR

Nature

Access to Lake Artemesia and surrounding woods; generous yards with gardens, fruit trees, and farm animals providing fresh, wholesome food.



05

PILLAR FIVE

Connectivity

Black-owned local businesses serving everyday needs; easy access to the wider metro area via trolley car and rail, linking Lakeland to opportunity.

A Thriving Community

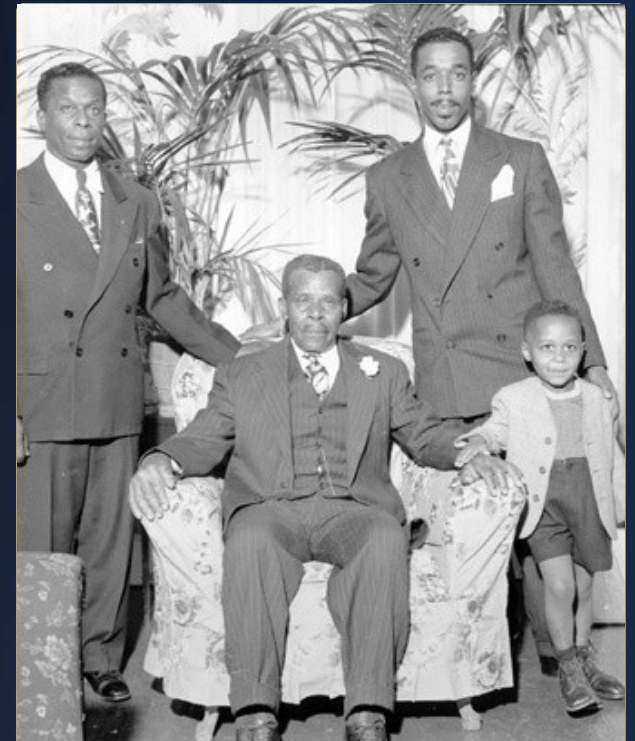
LAKELAND · CIRCA 1920S – 1960S



 Tree-lined **Lakeland Road** — homes built with pride and community spirit.



 **First Baptist Church and Embury AME** — the bedrock of Lakeland's spiritual and social life.



 **Three generations** of families called Lakeland home.



Photos courtesy of Lakeland Community Heritage Project & Lakeland Digital Archive

• Afro American Newspapers / Gado / Getty Images

Urban Renewal's Documented Harm to Lakeland

What College Park, Prince George's County, and Federal Policies Cost the Lakeland Community

SIX MEASURES OF LOSS

104

HOUSEHOLDS DISPLACED

Out of 150 total — 69% of Lakeland's families forcibly removed



69%

75%

BLACK-OWNED HOMES RAZED

Owner-occupied Black homes bulldozed or burned during urban renewal



75%

70+

YEARS OF COMMUNITY LIFE ERASED

Decades of Black self-determination, culture, and civic life destroyed



Irreversible

2,500

COMMUNITIES DEVASTATED NATIONALLY

Lakeland is one of thousands destroyed by urban renewal across America



Nationwide

~120

YEARS SINCE LAKELAND'S FOUNDING

Est. 1900 — the community endures, its descendants still fighting for repair



Community Persists

\$0

FAIR MARKET COMPENSATION

Most displaced families received little to no fair compensation for lost homes and generational wealth



Justice Denied

A Systematic Dismantling of Beloved Community

Urban renewal policies in the 1960s–1980s stripped Lakeland of every pillar of community wellbeing.



Homes & Generational Wealth

75% of owner-occupied homes demolished; land transferred to City and University; generational wealth lost permanently.



Schools & Education

Lakeland's culturally affirming school for Black children closed; the educational identity of the community severed.



Churches & Gathering Spaces

Congregation displacement scattered social networks and bonds of fellowship built over generations.



Access to Nature

A concrete wall cut the community off from Lake Artemesia; green spaces, gardens, and yards bulldozed.



Connectivity

Businesses shuttered; transportation access diminished as the trolley era ended without adequate replacement.



Community Trust

Promises of 'improvement' were never delivered; a betrayal of civic trust by College Park that echoes to the present day.

Before & After: The Transformation of Lakeland



1900 – 1969

Lakeland Before Urban Renewal



- 150 households, majority Black homeowners with multigenerational roots
- Thriving churches, schools, and civic clubs anchoring daily life
- Lake Artemesia freely accessible to all Lakeland residents
- Local Black-owned businesses lining main street, serving the community
- Trolley service connecting residents directly to Washington, DC
- Multigenerational families rooted, safe, and loved in place



1981 – TODAY

Lakeland After Urban Renewal

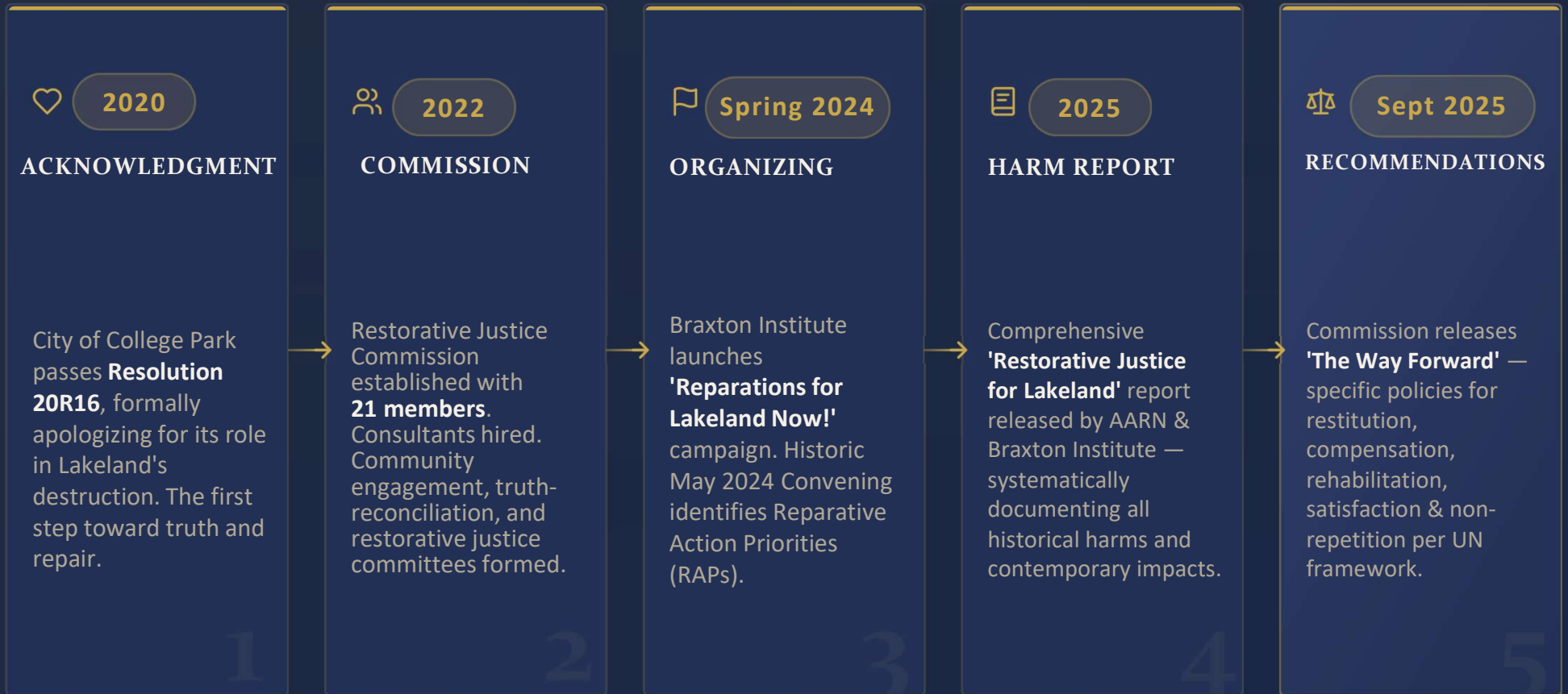


- 104 families forcibly displaced from their homes and community
- Homes bulldozed; land conveyed to the university and city government
- Concrete wall erected, permanently blocking resident access to Lake Artemesia
- Black-owned businesses eliminated; economic infrastructure destroyed
- Generational wealth permanently destroyed — most received \$0 fair compensation
- Community scattered across the region; social networks severed overnight

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PROCESS

College Park's Journey Toward Repair

From apology to accountability — a multi-stage restorative justice process.



Five Pillars of Repair — The Commission's Recommendations

UN REPARATIONS FRAMEWORK

Based on the United Nations five essential elements for reparations, the Commission calls on College Park, Prince George's County, the State of Maryland, UMD, WMATA, and HUD to act.



1

PILLAR ONE

Restitution

- 'Lakeland Legacy Member' designation
- Establish Lakeland Legacy Council
- Right of First Refusal on real estate
- Return to Lakeland homeownership program
- Restore access to Lake Artemesia



2

PILLAR TWO

Compensation

- Direct payments for forced displacement (1969–1981)
- Lakeland Legacy Scholars program
- Free college tuition for descendants
- Fair-market restitution for demolished homes



3

PILLAR THREE

Rehabilitation

- Community-based supplemental education within Lakeland
- Cultural & institutional development
- Youth leadership programs
- Intergenerational healing initiatives



4

PILLAR FOUR

Satisfaction

- Memorialize at Pierce Avenue site
- Memorial at Lakeland School site
- Visual representation of Resolution 20R16
- Lakeland Digital Archive — ongoing documentation



5

PILLAR FIVE

Non-Repetition

- Systemic policy changes vs. future displacement
- Environmental protections
- Equitable zoning & transportation access
- Lakeland as national reparations model

Immediate, Near-Term, and Long-Term Actions

Restorative justice is not a moment — it is a sustained commitment.



PHASE ONE IMMEDIATE

Now – 2026

- ◆ Formally designate Lakeland Legacy Members and establish Legacy Council
- ◆ Begin memorialization at Pierce Avenue and Lakeland School sites
- ◆ Adopt Right of First Refusal policy for Lakeland Urban Renewal District
- ◆ Fund Lakeland Digital Archive for ongoing community documentation

1

PHASE TWO NEAR-TERM

2026 – 2030

- ◆ Launch Return to Lakeland homeownership program
- ◆ Begin construction of new affordable homes within Lakeland
- ◆ Launch Lakeland Legacy Scholars tuition program for descendants
- ◆ Restore visual and physical access to Lake Artemesia
- ◆ Expand community-based education programs in Lakeland

2

PHASE THREE LONG-TERM

2030 & Beyond

- ◆ Achieve full fair-market restitution for all displaced families
- ◆ Establish permanent cultural and educational institutions in Lakeland
- ◆ Embed systemic non-repetition protections in city planning code
- ◆ Position Lakeland as national model for urban reparations — serving 2,500 impacted communities

3

The Time for Repair Is Now.

"It is now impossible to erase Lakeland from its history — or from its future."

— Braxton Institute, 2025



ACKNOWLEDGE

Honor the documented harms and the dignity of every Lakeland resident displaced by urban renewal.



ACT

Implement the Commission's restorative justice recommendations with urgency and accountability.



ENSURE

Guarantee that what was done to Lakeland is never done to another community again.



Continue the Conversation

Learn more, share your story, or join the work of restorative justice in Lakeland.

Lakeland Community Heritage Project

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