

Public Comment on Item 13, Sundown Town Resolution
February 2, 2022 City Council Meeting

We are fully supportive of the proposed Sundown Town Resolution and look forward to working with the city in the coming months and years to see that it is fully implemented.

South Pasadena was a sundown town in the early 20th Century. Blacks, Latinos and Asian-Americans were not permitted to live in the city unless they were live-in servants or caretakers. They were required to leave town by sundown. A 1947 newspaper described South Pasadena as “an example of the extreme to which the trend toward restrictive racial and religious covenants can go.”

Our sundown town status did not result from a pervasive racist culture or lax civil rights protections, but rather from White supremacy, which infused official city policies and practices. South Pasadena city government didn’t merely harbor racist views; it took away rights under color of law. Because South Pasadena codified white supremacy, it must now put its whole weight behind eradicating.

Acknowledgement and apology are a start, but because people of color often bear the disproportionate brunt of policies thought to be color blind, special attention must be paid. That’s why we particularly support the resolution’s pledge to systematically evaluate all ordinances, policies, and practices for their racial impact. Indeed, the racial impact analysis provision is perhaps the most important and powerful part of the resolution—and potentially the most enduring.

We also support the city’s commitment to reviewing state and local policy to take positions consistent with reversing past racist policies and decreasing racial disparities; creation of a stakeholder process for community members to provide feedback on the city’s realization of its goals; and aiming to diversify commissions.

So let’s pass the Sundown Town Resolution tonight. It’s about time.

Sincerely,

Megan Adams
Ahilan Arulanantham
Matthew Barbato
Erin Bonz
Barbara Eisenstein
Richard Elbaum
M. Paige Fillion
Rachel Grayczyk
Michelle Hammond
Kate Hillel
Will Hoadley-Brill
Ella Hushagen

Phung Huynh
Amber Jaeger
Sam Jaeger
Eryn Kalavsky
Matthew Kalavsky
William Kelly
Afshin Ketabi
Noah Kuhn
Todd Leonard
Melissa Lien
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Cassie McCarty
Sharon Mizota
Debra McCurdy
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Allison Schreiner
Sandy Shannon
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Richard Tom
Helen Tran