

Recommendations to the Carlisle Borough Council

December 2022

Submitted by the Carlisle Borough Truth and Reconciliation
Commission

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Background

The Carlisle Borough Council (the Borough) established the Truth & Reconciliation Commission (TRC or the Commission or the Commission) via resolution 03-11-2021-01, enacted after the January 2021 town hall on racial equity. The TRC was charged with further investigating systemic racism in the Borough and recommending actions to promote racial justice and equity. The TRC-establishing ordinance (the Ordinance) instituted an end date of December 31, 2022, for the Commission.

Past the TRC's formal expiration, it leaves the Carlisle Borough Council with recommendations to advance these efforts in the community. The Commission segmented the report by seven key non-exhaustive themes: Law Enforcement, Arts & Public Education, Housing & Neighborhood Vibrancy, Public Health, Business & Commerce, Indigenous Relations, and Future of this Work. Solutions are woven into each which address structural racism and include recommendations to heal the intergenerational trauma from institutions and also through the lens of forced participation in the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. One to two Commissioners developed each grouping of recommendations, and these authors may provide additional context should members of Borough Council request expansion or references. The seven themes are presented in this report in the order in which they were researched and discussed by the TRC. The order in which they appear is in no way a comment on their relative importance. Where possible, recommendations concerning Indigenous Relations have been integrated into other themes. However, in part because it was the last theme addressed and in part because of the nature of the subject matter, the TRC opted to devote a theme to Indigenous Relations.

The Commission suffered setbacks during its tenure: group attrition, member availability, technical difficulties, and low community engagement that impeded the TRC's momentum at various points. These challenges, in some ways, served as reminders that antiracist work requires patience and time, and that this work must not stop.

Part of this recommendation series will address the need for ongoing efforts, especially as the Commission as originally conceived dissolves, honoring the resolution's initial end date. Truth-telling and reconciliation in racial justice must, however, continue in perpetuity. Many of the TRC's recommendations address gaps in its own research, imploring the Borough to advance ongoing efforts. Often, the Commission's recommendations suggest that the Borough create a new group or amplify an existing organization to expand fact-finding efforts, gain knowledge, and draw closer to the Borough's intent. Carrying these recommendations forward would support the Borough Council and the Carlisle community.

Moving forward, several Commissioners may offer their time and assistance for the furtherance of these recommendations in paid or unpaid capacities, as appropriate. However, the Commission entrusts the Borough officials with responsibility for enacting the recommendations proposed in this report. Further, the Commission believes it is vital that each recommendation be given serious consideration for action now. Increased trust among community members and local government is an integral block in the foundation for overall success and putting action behind recommendations will help to facilitate this trust. Guest speaker Dr. Colleen Murphy, whose professional work focuses on transitional justice, emphasized as much in her public presentation on the TRC. The first point she summarized in 'General Lessons' is this: "The work of the TRC – its overall successes and/or

failures – will be affected by the extent to which its recommendations are implemented.”¹ Successful implementation will demand timely, sincere, and thorough follow-up from Carlisle Borough Council, prioritizing these recommendations and engaging Commissioners – and, importantly, the public – in its execution.

Finally, the Commission extends its gratitude to the Borough and the public for their collective support. Clearly defining the Commission’s objectives and organizing its membership and resources were iterative challenges that slowed work. Nonetheless, this initiative marked a sincere effort to learn from past mistakes and help create a more equitable and vibrant community. The TRC acknowledges both individual and collective efforts in Carlisle to better understand and combat structural, systemic, and institutional racism, and greatly appreciates those devoted to this critical work.

The TRC’s Mission is:

To improve racial justice and racial equity by meeting our community where it is and engaging it in truth-telling and reconciliation.

To examine existing policies as well as past and present practices and structures that contribute to systemic racism.

To develop guidance for Borough officials about next steps for making our community more just and equitable through accountability and transformative change.

¹ Murphy, Colleen. “Carlisle, PA Truth and Reconciliation Commission.” October 13, 2022

Executive Summary of Recommendations

Law Enforcement:

1. The Borough should provide scholarships for people, particularly women and racial minorities, to go to the police academy in exchange for several years of service with the Carlisle Police Department.
2. The Borough should provide financial incentives for officers to live within the Borough.
3. The Carlisle Police Department should collect and store more data about arrests, such as the race and gender information about arresting officers during arrests, just as arrests currently include race and gender information about arrestees, and information about whether an arrestee is armed and any use of force.
4. The Carlisle Police Department should require patrolling decisions to be made on the basis of reviewable, quantitative data with the goal of improved relationships with members of the community.
5. All information about a person's arrest should be retained internally by the Carlisle Police Department as long as the law permits; however, such information should not be accessible to the general public, without a Right-To-Know Law request, after one year.

Arts & Public Education:

1. The Borough should create two positions, one faculty and one student, to operate as liaisons between the Carlisle Area School Districts and the Borough Council.
2. The Borough should establish or partner with an existing educational body to educate community members on topics of racial injustice and discrimination and their effects.
3. The Borough should collaborate with Tribal Nation or First Nation members currently living in and around Carlisle who are interested in developing LandBack type initiatives collaboratively, thereby building more trusting relationships and beginning the process of restoring aspects of Indigenous culture (including the ability to grow medicines, conduct ceremonies, and use Indigenous languages) that were deliberately targeted for elimination by the Carlisle Indian Industrial School and its assimilation mandate.
4. The Borough should adopt practices consistent with the principles of antiracism to increase Black and brown representation in community events and projects including but not limited to the Summer Concert Series and Holiday celebrations. There are several organizations that provide guidance on these practices, such as the National Minority Supplier Development Council.
5. The Borough should fund a project at the Cumberland County Historical Society for the purposes of compiling an anthology of Black burial grounds and properties of historical distinction.

Housing & Neighborhood Vibrancy:

1. The Borough should partner with the Redevelopment and Housing Authorities to increase efforts to beautify public housing and homes from North Street to the Expo Center.
2. The Borough should plant additional trees and develop more aesthetically pleasing plans for the new sidewalk extenders/traffic control sidewalks so as to beautify the neighborhood and provide natural cooling to houses.

3. The Borough should work in partnership with Redevelopment and Housing Authorities to create and encourage participation in programs that offer various resources, including home ownership assistance.
4. The Borough should offer financial incentives to landlords and homeowners who complete diversity and bias training AND rent to racially diverse populations while maintaining occupancy expectations.

Public Health:

1. The Borough should promote and host easily accessible Health Hearing events to better understand health-related issues afflicting Carlisle residents, especially those which tend to go unheard or unrecognized.
2. The Borough should partner with local health agencies to gather data on and provide services and training for community members.
3. The Borough should sponsor a “Community Reads” book club program on health-related topics.

Business & Commerce:

1. Formalize the collective relationship between the Borough and the Carlisle Area Chamber of Commerce, Employment Skills Center, Downtown Carlisle Association, South Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board (SCPa Works), and Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation (CAEDC) toward the improvement of DEI.
2. Collect, curate, and formally report (perhaps annually) relevant quantitative data to the public (including information about Black and other minority-owned businesses in the Carlisle Area), Mayor’s office, Borough Council, and other Borough and County officials.
3. The Borough should enhance, incentivize, and strengthen job and business education outreach to individuals (particularly youth) from the black community leveraging existing community and regional resources (i.e., Chamber of Commerce, Employment Skills Center, Carlisle Downtown Association, and other influencers) in new ways.
4. The Borough should create a seasonal Youth Internship Program to promote sustained interest in job and career opportunities in the Borough’s central departments (e.g., finance, parks & recreation, public works) among community youth.

Indigenous Relations:

1. The Borough should collaborate with the U.S. Army War College and others to remove barriers to repatriation per Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act NAGPRA.² This will apply to graves currently located within Carlisle Barracks and those in other locations across Cumberland County (including on privately held land).
2. The Borough should investigate and publish a list of religious orders historically or currently involved in supporting the Carlisle Indian Industrial School’s assimilation mandate. Assure

² NAGPRA
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/101st-congress/house-bill/5237#:~:text=Native%20American%20Graves%20Protection%20and%20Repatriation%20Act%20%2D%20Provides%20for%20the.on%20Federal%20or%20tribal%20lands.>

these entities, whether through charitable or other avenues, do not receive funding for initiatives related to Indigenous matters. Assure the funding is given directly to projects that originate from Indigenous initiatives.

3. The Borough should support Indigenous Language revitalization efforts. Privilege those languages that were specifically targeted for destruction as one of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School's mandates. While looking for ways to fund, consider the complicity of Land Grant Universities, such as Penn State in relocation of entire Nations and its continued support to the Residential School movement over its 150 year operation across the US and Canada. (Note the connection to Arts & Public Education Recommendation 3).
4. The Borough should research, consult and collaborate toward realization of LandBack³ actions (ex: restoration of lands and waters showcase projects or compensation toward language revitalization targeted to descendent families and Nations of Carlisle Indian School).

Future of this Work:

1. The Borough should establish a TRC Standing Committee similar in composition and charge to the Climate Action Committee and whereby similar considerations for policy and procurement activities are met with similar fortitude.
2. The TRC Standing Committee should be charged with researching the efficacy of a permanent investment in a chief diversity officer, considering partnerships with organizations such as the Antiracist Development Institute at Dickinson Law, and establishing an Indigenous Relations Committee.
3. The TRC Standing Committee should hold regular events for the purpose of facilitating the collection of feedback from Borough residents and other interested parties and supporting the reconciliation process on the model of the TRC's signature event, "Thinking about Race Thursdays."

³ <https://redpaper.yellowheadinstitute.org/>

Detailed Recommendations by Subject

Law Enforcement

The formation of this Commission and many others like it was spurred and encouraged by national outrage, outrage over the May 2020 murder of George Floyd. Floyd, an unarmed Black man, was brutally killed in Minneapolis, Minnesota, by a White police officer, Derek Chauvin. Floyd's death was emblematic of a major impediment to racial reconciliation in America: policing that does not aim at safeguarding the life, liberty, and dignity of each person in equal measure. While the Borough has not been home to such despicable police practice, it also has not been perfect, and there is room for improvement. As such, the Commission makes several recommendations with respect to the Carlisle Police Department. These recommendations are grounded in knowledge from academic sources as well as locally gathered information about the composition of the police department, its policies, and the views of those subject to its jurisdiction, that is, those who live, work, study, and play in Carlisle.

Policing Recommendation 1: The Borough should provide scholarships for people, particularly women and racial minorities, to go to the police academy in exchange for several years of service with the Carlisle Police Department

The Carlisle Police Department is disproportionately male and White. This is a problem. The problem does not lie in a wrongheaded suspicion that White, male officers are more likely to arrest or target racial minorities or others. Academic research shows little evidence that making police forces more racially diverse changes patterns of arrest. Even so, a more representative police force may foster greater trust between the police force and the community, particularly the youth. Correspondingly, an unrepresentative police force may seem alienating to certain community members.

To fix this problem, the Carlisle Police Department must hire more women and racialized minorities. The Department embraces this goal, but it faces formidable challenges in both recruitment and retention. It is difficult to recruit members of some groups to become officers in the first place, and even if the Department does manage to make hires, these officers often leave for opportunities with the state police or in other municipalities.

To assist the Department in both its recruitment and retention goals, the Borough should provide scholarships for people to attend the police academy. These scholarships should be in the form of conditionally-forgivable loans that would be forgiven, provided that the officer successfully completes police academy in a certain number of years, applies to and is hired by the Carlisle Police Department, and remains on the force in good standing for a certain number of years. By providing this financial incentive, the Department may become a more attractive option for many, including those who had not considered policing as a possible profession. Also, the conditions of the loan-forgiveness might help with retention.

While Equal Protection considerations bar the Borough from making this opportunity exclusively available to women and racial minorities, those charged with selecting persons for the scholarship should place special emphasis on how the applicant might contribute to fostering more community

trust and enhancing community relationships, including but not limited to considerations of diversifying the Carlisle Police Department.

Policing Recommendation 2: The Borough should provide financial incentives for officers to live within the Borough.

Many jurisdictions throughout the United States have or have had residency requirements for police officers. Our Borough requires the Chief to live within the Borough, but not the officers. As a result, less than a tenth of the force lives within the Borough.

Scholars and activists are very much divided about the merits of residency requirements. On the one hand, some have said that these requirements foster more community trust and will encourage officers to treat community members with greater care. On the other hand, locales with such requirements do not report fewer community complaints about officers. In light of this disagreement, it is not surprising that the Borough has adopted something of a compromise. However, the Borough's compromise – residency requirements for the Chief but not for the rest of the officers – does not seem to achieve the best balance. The Chief is not primarily patrolling or responding to calls for service, so it makes little sense to single out the Chief for residency requirements. Meanwhile officers that do interact with the public more often are exempted from such requirements, thereby missing out on whatever benefits that attend having officers as members of the community they serve. The Commission, therefore, recommends a new compromise. While there are possibly great benefits to requiring all officers to reside within the Borough, this is not certain and imposing an across-the-board residency requirement may hamper recruitment and retention efforts. Instead of this, the Commission recommends that the Borough provide financial incentives for all officers to live within the Borough.

Policing Recommendation 3: The Carlisle Police Department should collect and store more data about arrests, such as the race and gender information about arresting officers during arrests, just as arrests currently include race and gender information about arrestees, and information about whether an arrestee is armed and any use of force

On a national level, scholars and others have been trying to establish whether White police officers unfairly target racial minorities, but they face a deficit of hard data that would conclusively prove or disprove this hypothesis. Scholars often resort to speculative evidence with questionable external validity. On the local level, we also lack data. The Commission recommends that the Police Department collect race and gender data about arresting officers to enable scholars or government officials to better understand the racial and gendered dynamics in arrests and to make informed policy as needed. The Commission also recommends that the Police Department collect information about the use of force and whether arrested suspects are armed, as gathering this information will also equip policymakers and the general public with the information needed to make laws that safeguard the whole community.

Policing Recommendation 4: The Carlisle Police Department should require patrolling decisions to be made on the basis of reviewable, quantitative data

Patrolling decisions at the Carlisle Police Department are currently made informally without the benefit of quantitative evidence, e.g., when service calls are made, how often such calls are made,

how many crimes happen in which areas, etc. Though this informal practice has served the community well, and crime rates are low, such informal decision-making has the potential to encode biases. Some community members feel that they are over-policed, thus impeding trusting relationships. Even if bias does not pervade patrolling decisions, the fact that decisions are made without quantitative evidence may cause the public to perceive bias. Knowledge that policing decisions are made on the basis of impartial evidence may alleviate distrust of the police felt by some community members. For these reasons, the Commission recommends that the Department make its patrolling decisions based on reviewable, quantitative data, some which should be made available to the public.

Policing Recommendation 5: All information about a person’s arrest should be retained internally by the Carlisle Police Department as long as the law permits; however, such information should not be accessible to the general public, without a Right-To-Know Law request, after one year.

Evidence of a person’s arrest is something that community members want to have. At the same time, this interest in knowledge must be balanced against harms to the arrested individual, as well as the systemic barriers and inequities that facilitate some criminal behavior. Such a person may be unfairly stigmatized, and this may have negative repercussions for the arrestee in terms of access to shelter, home ownership, and employment. For that reason, the Commission recommends that information held by the Police Department about a person’s arrest should not be generally available to the general public one year after the arrest takes place.

While the Commission makes this recommendation, it is also sensitive to two other concerns. First, law enforcement may have legitimate reasons to retain information about arrests, thus, subject to Pennsylvania law about the expungement of arrest records, the Commission recommends that the Carlisle Police Department retain internal records of arrests. Second, scholars, journalists, and others have legitimate reasons to access arrests; their investigations help to keep the public aware of general trends in law enforcement which is necessary for the democratic control of our criminal justice system. As such, the Commission recommends that arrest records should be internally maintained by the Carlisle Police Department in order that sanctioned parties can request them for legitimate research purposes. The criteria for legitimate research purposes should be made clear and a record of all researchers granted access should be maintained.

Art & Public Education

One of this Commission’s primary charges has been engaging with Carlisle residents, specifically, as stated in the bylaws, to “provide opportunities for individuals impacted and traumatized by systemic racism to share their stories and experiences, relating to policies, practices, and actions by the Borough and Council.” Such engagement has proven particularly elusive. Commissioners have sought dialogue with Borough residents, both through attendance of existing public events and in the creation of “Thinking about Race Thursdays.” Despite these efforts, however, consensus maintains that the target voices have not been heard or represented. The Commission seeks to address this in several arts & public education recommendations. Through events and initiatives, it is the hope of the Commission that the Borough will better build trust and engage BIPOC members of the community while leveraging the TRC’s lessons learned.

What the Commission has learned in several events, primarily from non-minority community members, is a desire to better engage in topics around race and discrimination. Considering this, several recommendations in the arts & public education section support enhanced learning opportunities for the greater community to learn about outcomes of racial bias and discrimination. Additionally, some of the arts and public education influence stems from Commissioners' experiences, academic sourcing, or learnings outside of data analysis and "Thinking about Race Thursdays." It is the hope of this Commission that the Borough adopt proposals that continue the Commission's outreach efforts but also those shaped by lived experience and from learnings from seminars and similar commissions.

Arts & public education **Recommendation 1: The Borough should create two positions, one faculty and one student, to operate as liaisons between the Carlisle Area School District and the Borough Council.** These liaisons should be encouraged to attend Borough Council meetings and other civic events to speak on behalf of faculty and students at the school.

Although the Commission recognizes the inability to directly influence the public education system, there are measures Borough Council can take to better respond to issues facing the Carlisle Area School District, which intersects with the town considerably. Because the school is large and a strong representation of Borough demographics, opinions and frustrations of faculty and students are likely reflective of a way of life in Carlisle.

Designation of liaison roles would give the Borough a better understanding of challenges in education and student life over which it has jurisdiction. In selection of these roles, the Borough (or faculty members) should consider representation; that is, they should seek a diverse pool which includes voices from different races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

One Commissioner who is close with the school district regularly gains valuable insight by engaging with Black students in the Carlisle School District. Understandably, many of the challenges these students express overlap with other TRC focal areas, such as policing. While the school is a safer space to express frustration and trauma, it's unlikely these concerns ever reach Borough Council. If the Borough establishes roles where individuals can speak on behalf of teachers and students, their needs, and concerns – which might not be otherwise communicated – might better influence Borough policy. Building trust and understanding with youth in the community is paramount to just, equitable, and authentic relationships between the Borough and her residents.

Arts & public education **Recommendation 2: The Borough should establish or partner with an existing educational body to educate community members on topics of racial injustice and discrimination and their effects.**

The TRC's "Thinking about Race Thursdays" established an opportunity for the Commission to collect qualitative data. Consistent with the bylaws, this was the group's effort to learn the stories of local individuals "impacted and traumatized by systemic racism." However, engagement fell below the Commission's expectations, and people did not attend with this kind of testimony. In retrospect, Commissioners accepted that a new, unproven body asking its most vulnerable population to share difficult stories so publicly was a monumental ask. However, white community members often engaged via the TRC email or Thursday events. Education was a prevailing theme. One participant in the inaugural "Thinking about Race Thursday" recommended literature to the Borough's white

population to help them better understand privilege. At a later event, white Carlisle residents expressed desire to learn more about the challenges of their BIPOC counterparts but lamented the lack of opportunities to do so.

The Borough should work closely with existing groups in the community, or establish their own, to educate the community on topics around systemic racism and its impact on Carlisle past and present. This should include speakers who specialize in certain fields as well as racialized minority speakers who can share their stories in the context of the Carlisle community.

While it may not seem germane to reconciliation to educate non-minority citizens, it's imperative that the Borough tackle the plague of racism from various angles. In addition to better supporting marginalized community members, there is significant value in providing learning opportunities for members in the racialized majority, specifically as they relate to structural racism and implicit bias. It's widely known that these may be blind spots, even for well-meaning white people. In addition to policy changes, better education can help build bridges towards reconciliation. And, because of the Commission's data collection, it's known that there's an appetite for this knowledge from some white members of the community.

Arts & public education **Recommendation 3: The Borough should collaborate with Tribal Nation or First Nation members currently living in and around Carlisle who are interested in developing LandBack type initiatives collaboratively, thereby building more trusting relationships and beginning the process of restoring aspects of Indigenous culture (including the ability to grow medicines, conduct ceremonies, and use Indigenous languages) that were deliberately targeted for elimination by the Carlisle Indian Industrial School and its assimilation mandate.**

In August 2021, a few guests attended the TRC's monthly meeting and offered support for "Orange Shirt Day," a Canadian National Truth and Reconciliation holiday in support of Indigenous people. Their passion and breadth of knowledge served as a reminder that the Carlisle Borough's history with Indigenous persons is troubling, just as its prior policy harmful to Black residents. Additionally, this served as a reminder that community members carry unique passions and knowledge, and that the Borough should leverage local expertise whenever possible. Like the previous initiative, the Borough should engage passionate local speakers to inform the community on past iniquities related to the Carlisle Indian School. This is a topic which receives less representation in the present, but warrants dialogue in the community and, as the Commission has learned, will reach more people with passion in this area. Carlisle will be better served educationally if the presenters are familiar faces from the community. Additional recommendations concerning reparation of relations with First Nations appear in the section on Indigenous Relations.

Arts & public education **Recommendation 4: The Borough should adopt practices consistent with the principles of antiracism to increase Black and brown representation in community events and projects including but not limited to the Summer Concert Series and Holiday celebrations. There are several organizations that provide guidance on these practices, such as the National Minority Supplier Development Council.**

The Borough should better evaluate how opportunities are extended when commissioning art or related projects in the Borough. For example, many utility boxes in the Borough were painted with

colorful designs. Borough should consider variety and the potential for economic impact when commissioning such initiatives, perhaps with language similar to that in the TRC ordinance.

Arts & public education **Recommendation 5: The Borough should fund a project at the Cumberland County Historical Society for the purposes of compiling an anthology of Black burial grounds and properties of historical distinction.** The historical acumen necessary for providing the Borough with the necessary information about past atrocities and victories within the Black and Brown communities are better delivered by a professional with experience in historical application of policy and legislation and how the best decisions of a time (contextually) may or may not have been informed by racism and white supremacy.

Housing & Neighborhoods Vibrancy

Carlisle Borough Council recently passed an ordinance amendment that will address rental housing queries from homeowners and renters in the borough. The Rental Inspection Program, which is set to begin September 1, 2022, is designed to ensure safe housing and consistent property values. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, however, is tasked with further scrutinizing housing and neighborhood vibrancy and making sound recommendations that will impact equity and inclusion. These recommendations are based upon existing ordinances, research, conversations with Carlisle Borough employees, and experiences of Carlisle residents. They are also designed to remedy uneven investments in neighborhoods and bridge the divide often recognized by the railroad tracks. In fact, the term “the wrong side of the tracks” reflects racially coded misconceptions prevalent among some community members, who carry the unjust perception that these persons in underserved geographies are less deserving of equitable opportunities and housing. The Commission hopes, in its housing and neighborhood vibrancy recommendations, to increase equitable resource disbursement for Carlisle residents regardless of location or socioeconomic status. Therefore, it is hereby the mission of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to make recommendations that will begin to break the legacy of racially segregated housing and neighborhoods, largely due to the now-illegal practice of redlining, and create aesthetically pleasing and quality areas regardless of the address.

Housing and Neighborhood Vibrancy **Recommendation 1: Partner with the Redevelopment and Housing Authorities to increase efforts to beautify public housing and homes from North Street to the Expo Center.** The Redevelopment and Housing Authorities of Carlisle are responsible for maintenance and beautification of public housing. Therefore, it is in the best interest of the borough to work in partnership with residents as well as these entities to ensure equity. As determined through observation and discussions with residents, there is great concern and disappointment that some public housing developments and rental homes are not aesthetically pleasing and don't receive the same attention to porches, sidewalks, and facades as homes on the I-81 side of Carlisle. For example, many of the rental homes have porches that are visibly in disrepair, facades are in need of power washing, and siding in need of painting and repair. Tenants are often hesitant to request that repairs be made in a timely manner for fear of retaliation or loss of housing - a basic human right. Some of this may be remedied when the Rental Inspection Program goes into effect. However, the public housing developments and rental homes in Carlisle must receive similar structural attention. Landlords and housing authorities can also include yearly inspections in their rental agreements to ensure that tenants are maintaining the property as well.

Carlisle can be a model for breaking systemic inequities informed by broken window policing and redlining.

Housing and Neighborhood Vibrancy **Recommendation 2: Plant additional trees and develop more aesthetically pleasing plans for the new sidewalk extenders/traffic control sidewalks so as to beautify the neighborhood and provide natural cooling to houses.** Homes and neighborhoods in southwest Carlisle are shaded and beautified by the multitude of trees lining the streets, a norm not present further north in the Borough. Trees add an aesthetic to an area but also a function; their natural shade provides cooling to homes and can lower energy bills. Furthermore, the newly installed extended sidewalks, which are reportedly intended to slow traffic, are visibly unkempt. There is a general feeling that sidewalks with wildflowers and weeds growing from within would not be accepted or even considered in areas near Dickinson College and beyond. Again, such sentiments trace back to the segregation era in which poor, black families on the proverbial “wrong side of the tracks” received inequitable treatment in terms of neighborhood vitality and housing.

Housing and Neighborhood Vibrancy **Recommendation 3: Work in partnership with Redevelopment and Housing Authorities to create and/or encourage participation in programs that offer various resources, including home ownership assistance.** Such programs are designed to assist public housing tenants to become more financially able to move out of public housing. This may be in the form of employment and training programs which are available in the borough through the United Way, PEEC, and the Employment Skills Center or in the form of home ownership programs and assistance.

Housing and Neighborhood Vibrancy **Recommendation 4: Offer financial incentives to landlords and homeowners who complete diversity and bias training AND rent to diverse populations while maintaining occupancy expectations.** This may include, but not be limited to demarcating the use of the outputs of systemic racism, such as criminal history and credit for those applying for housing.

Implicit bias in housing is a major factor in communities and a leading factor in residential segregation and is the perpetuation of the now-illegal practice of redlining. Historically, it has occurred by increasing rent, security deposits, and eliminating potential renters of color, especially those who have lower credit scores or a criminal history. While the Commission is not asking landlords to make unsafe decisions, we are recommending that bias training (potentially offered through Carlisle Borough) be offered so landlords can explore their own biases and how it has impacted their choices of tenants. Additionally, we would encourage quotas on diverse lending and selling practices, in addition to implicit racial bias training. Often, many potential tenants simply need the opportunity, and applicants of color have historically faced far more barriers than their white counterparts in the homebuying process. In fact, researchers at the University of Illinois Urbana found that despite the Fair Housing Act, Black and Hispanic renters receive fewer responses to housing inquiries and are less likely to be informed of housing availability in predominantly white areas. While this study did not span Carlisle, it's likely that trends from other cities will also impact Carlisle.

Public Health

The COVID-19 pandemic's impact in the United States reinforced the stark racial and economic inequities in healthcare, as the impacts of the virus disproportionately affected marginalized communities. Unfortunately, this didn't represent an aberration. Pandemic-related health outcomes ran consistent with historical trends adversely impacting Black and minority groups. It is widely understood that the coronavirus exposed structural health inequity, in part because Black and other minority Americans are already more susceptible to preexisting conditions, like diabetes and asthma, than their White counterparts. In fact, the CDC acknowledges racism as a barrier to health equity, noting, among other things, that the average life expectancy for Black/African Americans is four years lower than that of White Americans. Carlisle-specific health data isn't widely available. But while Carlisle might not perfectly mirror national averages, it is vital the Borough do everything in its power to understand the current state, and to promote health equity, especially as the population grows and becomes more diverse. To do this, the Borough should leverage existing resources. Local organizations like Sadler Health, Partnership for Better Health, and UPMC offer expertise and creativity, and can serve a symbiotic relationship where they support the Borough's work and vice versa. As such, it's critical that Borough authorities understand and respond to its citizens' health-related concerns and afflictions, through qualitative and quantitative research, especially those from marginalized groups who have historically suffered disproportionately adverse and negative outcomes.

Public Health Recommendation 1: The Borough Government should promote and host easily accessible Health Hearing events to better understand health-related issues afflicting Carlisle residents, especially those which tend to go unheard or unrecognized.

A Health Hearing event should function like a town hall meeting but narrow the scope to public health. This would enable residents to share their health concerns and provide residents the opportunity to share concerns related to health aspects, whether individual or public health, education, treatment, resource accessibility, and others, and explore health needs through a qualitative lens. Trends should be monitored that can point to environmental-informed illnesses that may stem from Carlisle's history with the manufacturing industry and their placement in neighborhoods addressed in the *Neighborhood and Vibrancy* section of these recommendations. Health.gov recognizes five major 'social determinants of health:' Economic Stability, Education Access and Quality, Healthcare Access and Quality, Neighborhood and Built Environment, and Social and Community Context. Hearing events could center around these topics to effectively focus the dialogue.

It's important not only to listen via the Health Hearing process, but also to respond with action. The Borough should also partner with local health organizations to connect resources to residents and acknowledge what is and is not feasible, given the current infrastructure. If wide-scale healthcare infrastructure changes are needed, the Borough should seek guidance from local agencies to enact them. The follow-up to the hearing process is as necessary as the sessions themselves. Additionally, the Borough should offer these Health Hearings in widely accessible locations, especially those near lower-income areas of Carlisle with more BIPOC representation. It's crucial that everyone in the community can make their voice heard and feel represented in these matters. In the Health Hearings,

the Borough has a tremendous opportunity to better understand the needs of the community and leverage existing resources to help advance necessary health equity.

Public Health Recommendation 2: The Borough should partner with local health agencies to gather data on and provide services and training for the community.

While the TRC lacked the capacity to capture health-specific data, the government can and should address this. The Borough should canvass its community to understand shortcomings in healthcare access or application. What Health Hearings are to qualitative data, the Borough's data collection would be to quantitative data, exposing potential gaps, racial or otherwise. Even where racial or even economic disparities aren't prevalent, the Borough would benefit from partnering with health officials to offer and promote universal training like First Aid and CPR. Additionally, evaluating factors like mental health provider ratios and ADA compliance, for example, could help government prioritize public needs and implement more accessible and equitable health infrastructure. The TRC recommends working with Carlisle's health agencies to determine what to collect and how.

Public Health Recommendation 3: The Borough should sponsor a "Community Reads" book club program on health-related topics.

In addition to his support of the TRC, especially its health recommendations, Dr. Marcellus Taylor has generously offered to design a curriculum for free. Book club sessions can engage the community while expanding public health education. The Borough should assist an endeavor through promotion and facilitation.

Business & Commerce

As of October 10, 2020, Black residents had the highest unemployment claims (10.2%), and Pacific Islander or Asian residents had the lowest unemployment claims (2.8%) in Cumberland County.⁴ The fastest growing populations in Carlisle are Asian and Non-Hispanic Black. From 2016 to 2021, jobs within the "17013" zip code declined by 3.5% (this growth rate is short of the national average by 5.3%).⁵ Last year, the top three employers in Carlisle were Restaurants/eating establishments, Colleges/Universities/Professional Schools, and General Freight Trucking; accommodation and food services are our lowest wage-earning jobs.⁶

In February 2022, the TRC identified the Carlisle Area Chamber of Commerce (i.e., the Chamber) as fundamental to its fact-finding efforts to advance racial justice, foster greater inclusiveness, and eliminate prejudice within our business community. The Chamber of Commerce has some 700 business members, some with internal diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts. The Chamber has emphasized support for women and veterans__and has not explicitly focused on the "African

⁴ Penn State Center for Economic and Community Development, Unemployment Claims by Race, Sex, and Age in Cumberland County Under COVID-19: February - October 10, 2020; Pre-pandemic data

⁵ South Central Workforce Development Board, Director of Strategic Initiatives; September 2022 Lightcast Data

⁶ South Central Workforce Development Board, Director of Strategic Initiatives; September 2022 Lightcast Data

American business community.” And due to several circumstances, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chamber could not supply quantitative business metrics to support our mutual concerns at this time.⁷ In May 2022, the Chamber held formal DEI training for its members by a certified master trainer and facilitator, Ms. Deborah Vereen, cofounder of Diversity & Inclusion Professionals of Central Pennsylvania (DIPCPA).

Commission members have acknowledged that preparing our young people for the local job market and perhaps a medium or small business career requires education and training. Carlisle’s Employment Skills Center (ESC) specializes in offering free education and training that leads to employment opportunities for the disadvantaged, disaffected, and disenfranchised. Like many organizations of this type, it is underfunded, given its mission. The ESC is a 501(c)3 level-funded non-profit organization that manages targeted programs for youth/young with some assistance from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). Contrary to popular belief, it is not an unemployment or job assistance office. It primarily serves young adults ages 17-21 in the Carlisle area (this is a function of the funded age group by the PDE). The ESC’s data show barriers to area employment hit low-income (32%) and single-parent (18%) families the hardest.

Targeted programs include job readiness and employability, digital literacy/computer skills, healthcare, forklift training, customer service and sales, and an exciting initiative called the Success Academy for Women & Girls. The Academy teaches empowerment, job readiness, and life skills. It has no age limit and is currently focused on women and girls only because of funding sources. According to the ESC’s Executive Director, Ms. Mindy Tremblay, this program could be expanded to include men and boys with assistance.

In an effort to understand the systemic challenges in this topic area, the TRC interviewed the Carlisle Area Chamber of Commerce and the Employment Skills Center. Those organizations identified the following challenges to racial equity and access to local business and commerce resources.

- financial and credit⁸
- discrimination
- mentoring
- entrepreneurial (e.g., financial literacy) and life skills education & training shortfalls
- sustaining consistent work and clients (i.e., community support)

⁷ The Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation has published labor statistics and workforce profile but no racial or ethnic diversity data were published, based on a review of information available on its website. Further research is warranted.
<https://cumberlandbusiness.com/datamap-demographics/workforce-profile/>

⁸ Black business loans are generally considered “high risk,” – so they have **7-8% interest**. NOTE: The average business loan interest rate ranges from **2.54% to 7.02%** at banks, according to the most recent data from the Federal Reserve (2.0% to 3.75% for Pennsylvania, according to Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation. These factors hinder Black entrepreneurship and participation in the Chamber.

The following draft recommendations are mutually supporting and may be championed, enabled, and enacted by the Borough.

Commerce and Business **Recommendation 1: Formalize the collective relationship between the Borough and the Carlisle Area Chamber of Commerce, Employment Skills Center, Downtown Carlisle Association, South Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board (SCPa Works), and Cumberland Area Economic Development Corporation (CAEDC) toward the improvement of DEI.** Lead an expanded coalition of stakeholders to explore and support initiatives to identify local job/business opportunities, enhance the quality of targeted and largely independent efforts to promote success, address gaps and enable transformative change. This recommendation aims to increase accountability and transparency, improve communication, elevate awareness and promote actionable community behaviors and solutions.

Commerce and Business **Recommendation 2: Collect, curate, and formally report (perhaps annually) relevant quantitative data to the public (including information about Black and other minority-owned businesses in the Carlisle Area), Mayor's office, Borough Council, and other Borough and County officials.** The South Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board (SCPa Works) and the Chamber have agreed in principle to share business metrics regularly (e.g., demographics, economic health, the number of business licenses issued, identify small and medium-sized minority businesses) with the Borough. The Chamber may consider publishing these data in a new section of its business directory. These data are essential to evaluate and document progress and chart a direction. Report progress and challenges at a public meeting of the Borough Council.

Commerce and Business **Recommendation 3: Enhance, incentivize, and strengthen job and business education outreach to individuals (particularly youth) from the Black community leveraging existing community and regional resources (i.e., Chamber of Commerce, Employment Skills Center, Carlisle Downtown Association, and other influencers) in new ways.** This recommendation would include Borough Outside Agency Funding to expand the ESC's Success Academy for Women and Girls to include Men and Boys. By working collaboratively and implementing a communications and information strategy to message the community, these organizations could empower communities of color to participate fully in the local business market and promote a sense of belonging.

Commerce & Business **Recommendation 4: Create a seasonal Youth Internship Program to promote sustained interest in job and career opportunities in the Borough's central departments (e.g., finance, parks & recreation, public works) among community youth.** In collaboration with SCPa Works_a source of funded internships), and the Carlisle Area School District, identify prospective students and perhaps offer educational credit for their participation. The funded internship might include mentorship and training on day-to-day business operations (e.g., services, financing, and legal requirements). This recommendation could lead to full-time employment with the Borough/County, which would: raise the socio-economic standing of the poor and disadvantaged in the community, bolster health equity and human security, support local vendors and aspiring entrepreneurs, and protect individuals from the dangers associated with enterprises that function outside the mainstream.

Indigenous Relations

In the last few months of the TRC's existence, it was strengthened by the addition of Ronda Tamblyn-Watts, who brought expertise and experience in Indigenous Relations. With her addition to the Commission, the TRC was able to develop some recommendations aimed explicitly at truth and reconciliation in relation to the grave harms caused by the Carlisle Indian Industrial School and its legacy.

Indigenous Relations **Recommendation 1: Collaborate with the U.S. Army War College and others to remove barriers to repatriation per Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act NAGPRA.**⁹ This will apply to graves currently located within Carlisle Barracks and those in other locations across Cumberland County (including on privately held land).

Indigenous Relations **Recommendation 2: Investigate and publish a list of religious orders historically or currently involved in supporting the Carlisle Indian Industrial School's assimilation mandate. Assure these entities, whether through charitable or other avenues, do not receive funding for initiatives related to Indigenous matters. Assure the funding is given directly to projects that originate from Indigenous initiatives.**

Indigenous Relations **Recommendation 3: Support Indigenous Language revitalization efforts. Privilege those languages that were specifically targeted for destruction as one of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School's mandates. While looking for ways to fund, consider the complicity of Land Grant Universities, such as Penn State in relocation of entire Nations and its continued support to the Residential School movement over its 150 year operation across the US and Canada.** (Note the connection to Arts and Public Education Recommendation 3).

Indigenous Relations **Recommendation 4: Research, consult and collaborate toward realization of LandBack¹⁰ actions (ex: restoration of lands and waters showcase projects or compensation toward language revitalization targeted to descendent families and Nations of Carlisle Indian School).**

Future of the Work

The Carlisle Borough Truth and Reconciliation Commission functioned more like a task force, with a comparatively short timeline and limited charge. While the TRC was able to research, critically examine, and ultimately recommend several action steps in that period of time, more work remains to be done and the implementation of those action steps will require the sustained engagement of a board or commission. Thus, Future of the Work **Recommendation 1: The Borough should establish a TRC Standing Committee similar in composition and charge to the Climate Action Committee and whereby similar considerations for policy and procurement activities**

⁹ NAGPRA

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/101st-congress/house-bill/5237#:~:text=Native%20American%20Graves%20Protection%20and%20Repatriation%20Act%20%2D%20Provides%20for%20the.on%20Federal%20or%20tribal%20lands.>

¹⁰ <https://redpaper.yellowheadinstitute.org/>

are met with similar fortitude. The Standing Committee should be non-partisan and liaise with other mission-relevant Borough bodies, including the Human Relations Commission, as necessary.

Furthermore, we recommend that the aforementioned committee be charged with some specific objectives. Hence, Future of the Work **Recommendation 2: The TRC Standing Committee should be charged with researching the efficacy of a permanent investment in a chief diversity officer, considering partnerships with organizations such as the Antiracist Development Institute at Dickinson Law, and establishing an Indigenous Relations Committee.** The Indigenous Relations Committee would implement the recommendations delineated in the Indigenous Relations section of this report in addition to other projects and initiatives as its members see fit.

The implementation committee might consider a Community Engagement model that employs a Community Engagement Director and 4-5 Community Connectors in a hub-spoke model, as such a model can help to facilitate the necessary trust and avenues for reciprocal information-sharing that are required for the advancement of systemic equity.

Finally, we offer Future of the Work **Recommendation 3: The TRC Standing Committee should hold regular events for the purpose of facilitating the collection of feedback from Borough residents and other interested parties and supporting the reconciliation process on the model of the TRC’s signature event, “Thinking about Race Thursdays.”**

The Council may, of course, assign other duties to the proposed committee as it sees fit. We emphasize charges delineated here because the TRC finds them merit-worthy and was unable to fully develop them in the time allotted.

Carlisle Borough Truth & Reconciliation Commissioners 2021 - 2022

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	Raff Donelson, Kendall Isaac, and Tristan Milazzo served abbreviated terms on the TRC. We thank them for their service. It contributed to the content and structure of this report.