



CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

FRANCESCA THOMAS

From your perspective, what happened to Russell City, why do you think it happened, and how did it affect your family?

From my perspective, the City of Hayward wanted the land for development and pushed back on obtaining utilities, sewage, fire and medical services to the community to force them out. My grandmother had to leave her home and abandon her restaurant.

What is your connection to the Russell City Community?

I am the great-great granddaughter of Miss Alves (Leona Alves), a Russell City Resident, who owned three properties in Russell City as well as the Ideal Dining restaurant that was located there. My mother and her three sisters also resided in Russell City and went to Russell School.

What is your background? What meaningful value or expertise can you bring to the committee?

I was born and raised in the City of Hayward and I own and operate a small business within the city limits. In my current role, I manage the day to day operations of the business that include finance, accounting, production, marketing and sales. Prior to owning my own business, I worked in Corporate America at numerous large corporations in various tax and accounting management roles. My extensive experience in leadership, time management, team-building, conflict resolution and communication skills would be an asset to the Steering Committee.

Do you have any additional or unique qualifications you would like to share? If so, please list them below.

Respondent skipped this question

Tell us about your experience working in a team or community-based process.

In my 20 + years of experience in Corporate America, I had the opportunity to lead and participate on many teams. In my last position, as a Tax Manager, I was responsible for leading, coordinating and managing tax audits as well as overseeing the team that prepared the corporate tax returns. I was also involved as team member in several company sponsored diversity groups such as the Black Employee Network and the Women's Employee Network. My leadership and participation on these teams has equipped me with the skill set necessary to be an effective, thoughtful and compassionate Steering Committee Member.



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What is your purpose for being here? As a member of the committee, what do you want to achieve? At the end of the day, what would you want to see happen and what are you willing to do to get us there?

My purpose for being here is to represent those community members who do not have a voice, who have passed on or who simply were not truly heard. I think it is important for the community at large to understand the true impact of what occurred in Russell City and specifically the impact to former residents. At the end of the day, I would like to see 1) some form of justice for the way people were treated 2) A memorial or museum or other commemorative landmark 3) Annual City sponsored events and 4) educational outreach. I am willing to reach out to the community, attend events, participate on the Steering Committee, garner/solicit sponsors and most importantly, work hard on our team's objectives.

Francesca Thomas