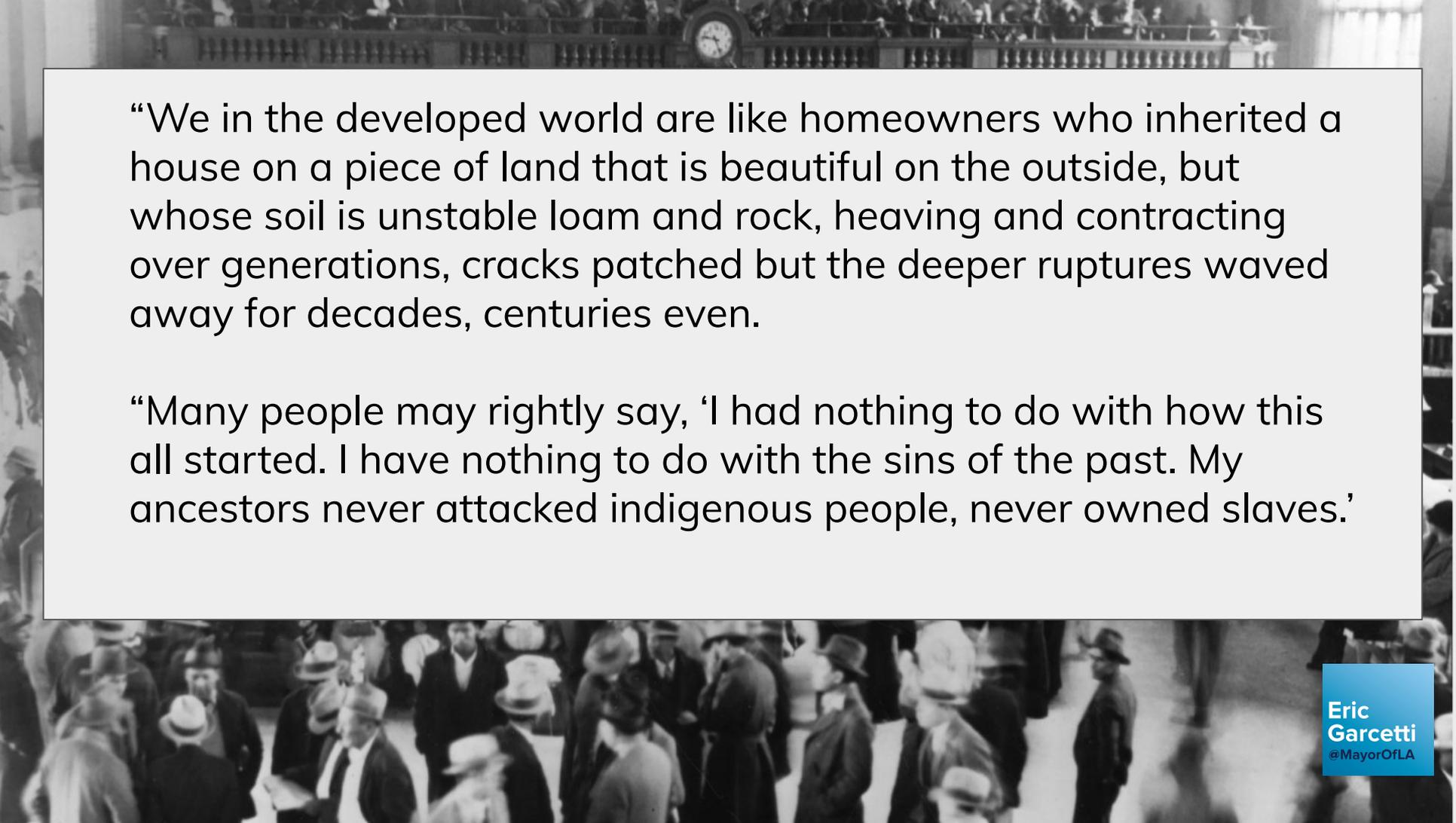


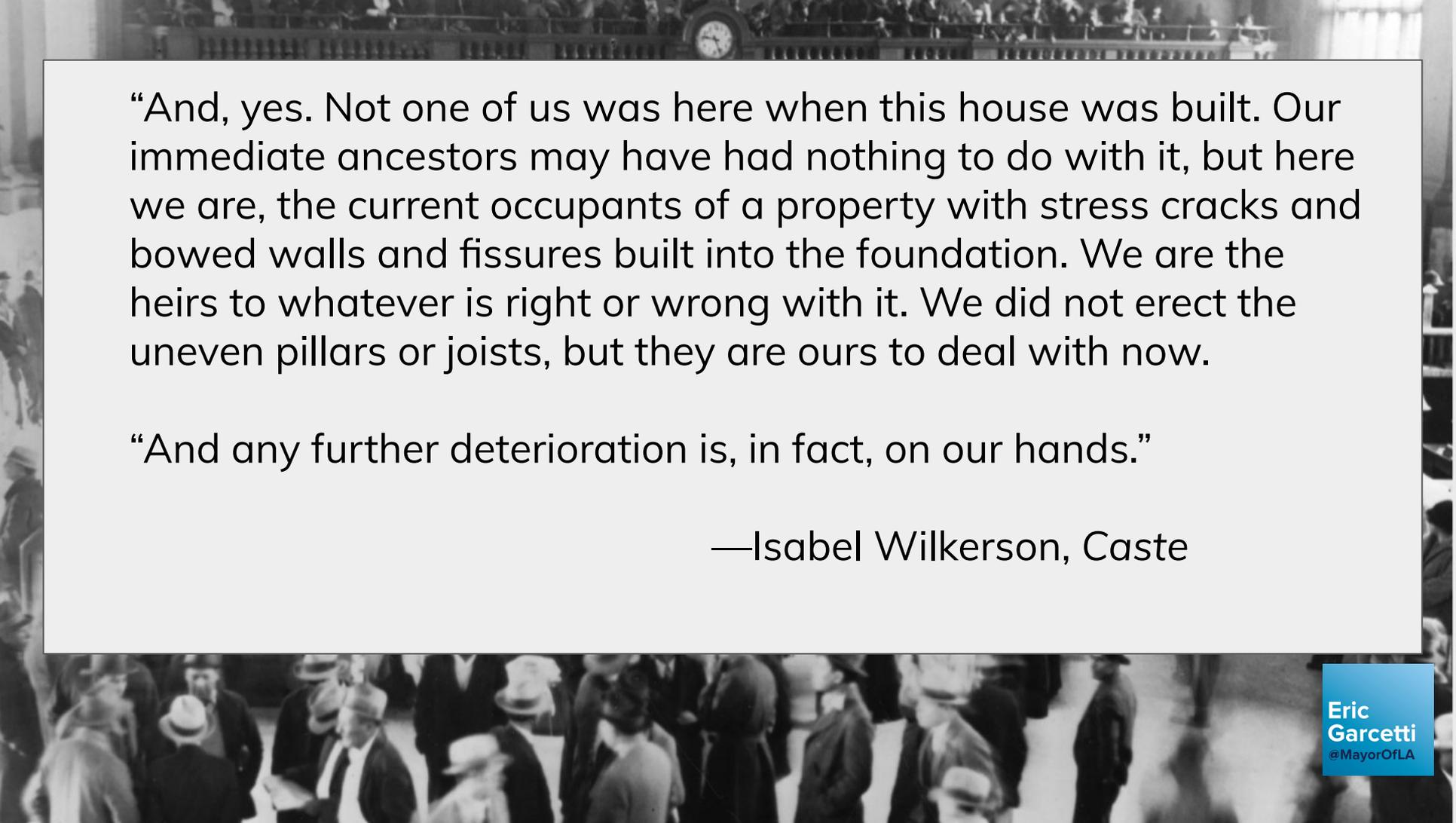
An aerial topographic map of a coastal region, likely Los Angeles, showing terrain, roads, and water bodies. A blue overlay covers the bottom left corner, containing text. In the bottom right corner, there is a blue square logo with white text.

**Chief Design Officer  
Briefing for Board of Recreation  
and Park Commissioners on the  
Civic Memory Working Group  
7.15.2021**



“We in the developed world are like homeowners who inherited a house on a piece of land that is beautiful on the outside, but whose soil is unstable loam and rock, heaving and contracting over generations, cracks patched but the deeper ruptures waved away for decades, centuries even.

“Many people may rightly say, ‘I had nothing to do with how this all started. I have nothing to do with the sins of the past. My ancestors never attacked indigenous people, never owned slaves.’



“And, yes. Not one of us was here when this house was built. Our immediate ancestors may have had nothing to do with it, but here we are, the current occupants of a property with stress cracks and bowed walls and fissures built into the foundation. We are the heirs to whatever is right or wrong with it. We did not erect the uneven pillars or joists, but they are ours to deal with now.

“And any further deterioration is, in fact, on our hands.”

—Isabel Wilkerson, *Caste*

## CHINESE MASSACRE

Chinese immigrants established their first community in Los Angeles in what is now part of El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument. By 1870 about two hundred Chinese had settled in Los Angeles Street across from the Carnier Building, then known as *Calle de Los Negros*.

Anti-Chinese legislation and social discrimination greatly affected Chinese American families and their community life. On March 3, 1863, the California Legislature passed a statute prohibiting Asian Americans from testifying in court as witnesses or victims. The statute left them without legal protection. On October 24, 1871, a dispute between two Chinese rivals over ownership rights to a female prostitute resulted in the accidental shooting of a Caucasian. Fueled by the incident and general anti-Chinese sentiment, a mob of 500 locals shot, hung, and stabbed innocent Chinese residents.

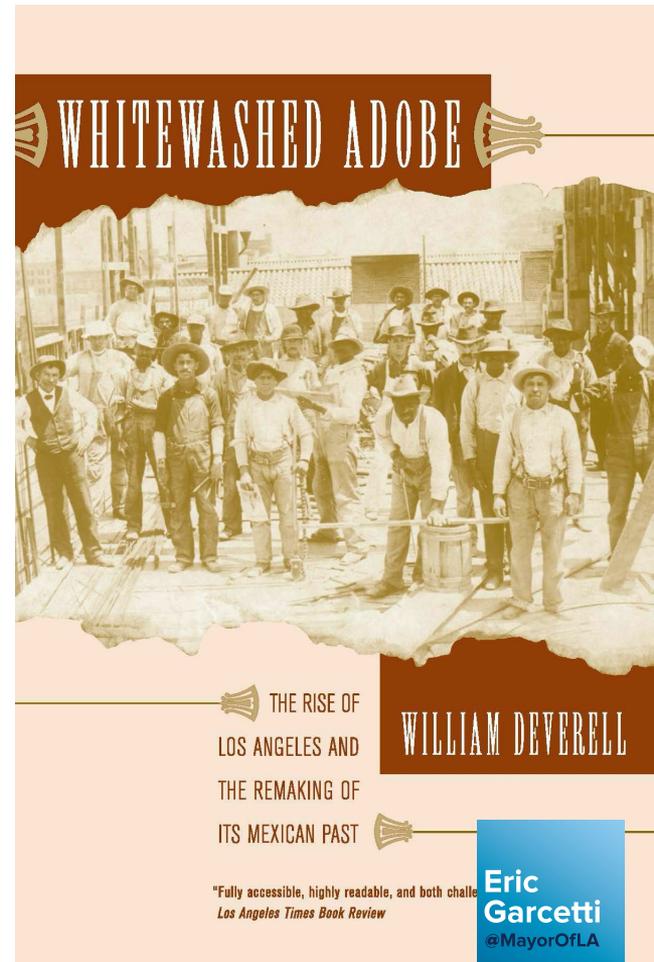
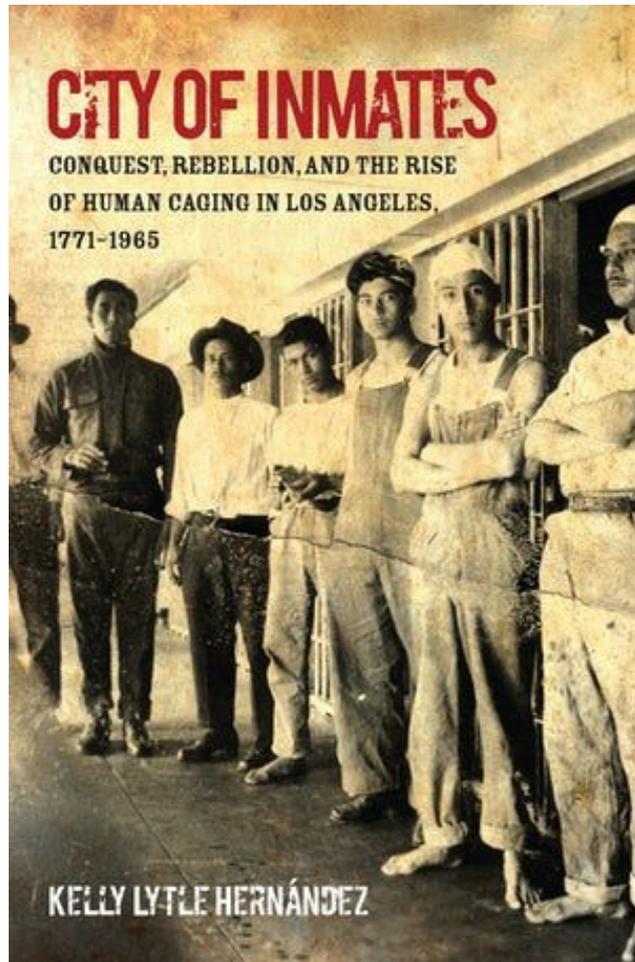
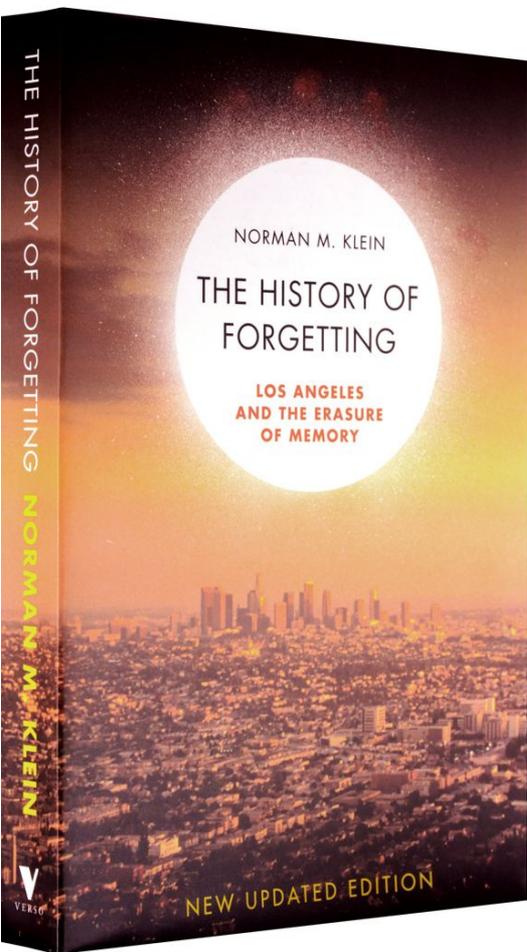
While some policemen and citizens tried to help the residents, they could not defend the victims against the mob. At the coroner's inquest, other policemen revealed that they found it pointless to arrest members of the mob, as the Chinese victims were not protected under law. In the end, nineteen Chinese living on *Calle de Los Negros* were murdered.

In 1872, nine men were convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to terms in San Quentin, ranging from two to six years each. On a technicality, the California Supreme Court overruled the decision in April 1873, and released the nine men.

### 一八七一年華埠大屠殺

自十九世紀中葉後種族歧視對華人影響很深。一八七一年十月二十四日，兩位華人為爭奪一位女子時誤殺一名白人。為此引起洛市五百多暴徒攻擊華埠，槍殺吊死無辜華人十八名。當時州法禁止亞裔在法庭作證。結果九名嫌犯在缺乏證據及審判程序有誤情況下全被獲釋。此事件成為美國史上最嚴重的暴動之一。





LOS  
ANGELES  
PLAYS  
ITSELF

I DONT WANT  
NO RETRO  
SPECTIVE

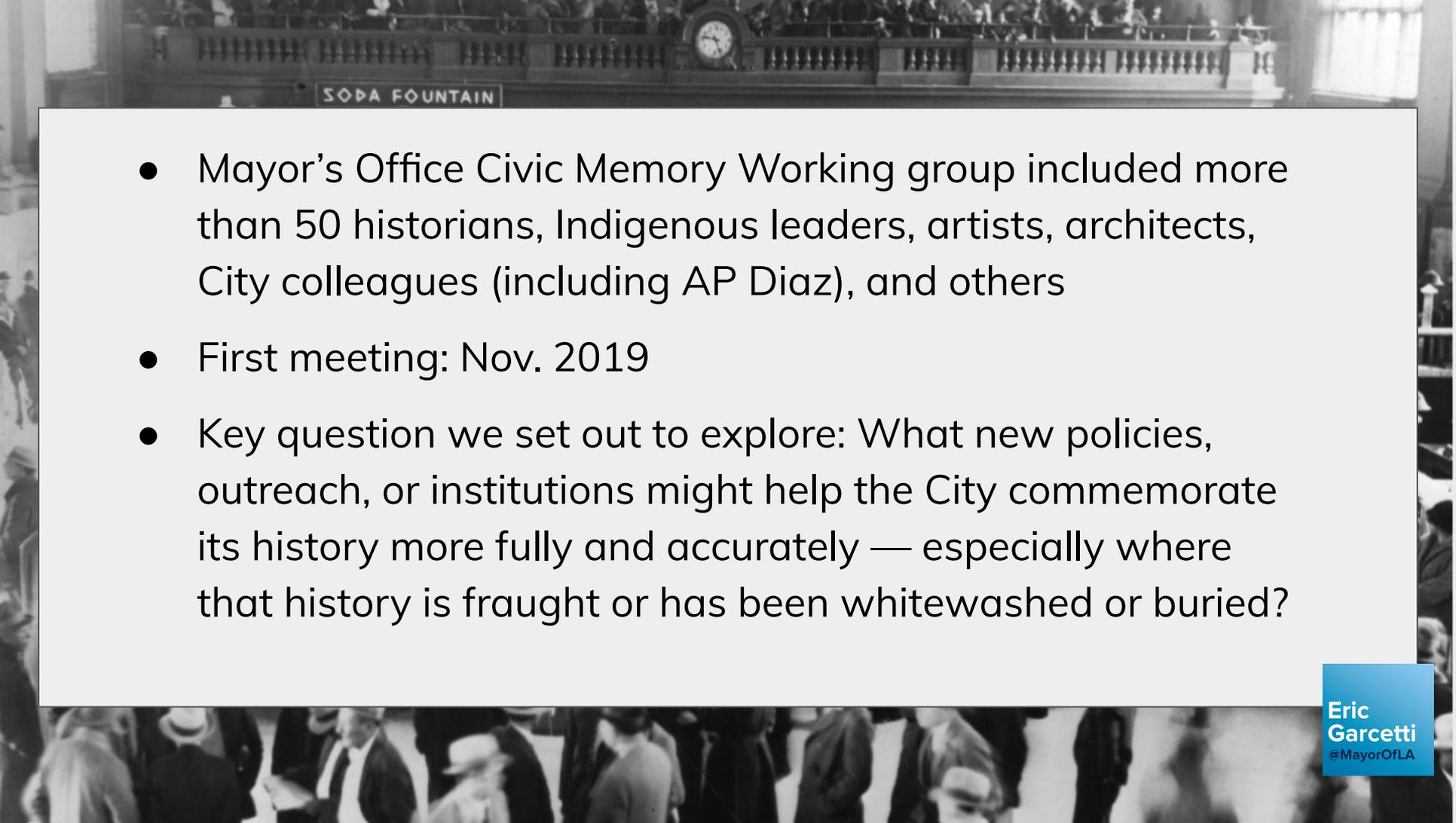
Ed Ruscha, *I DONT WANT NO RETRO SPECTIVE*, 1982





Photo: Gary Leonard



- 
- Mayor's Office Civic Memory Working group included more than 50 historians, Indigenous leaders, artists, architects, City colleagues (including AP Diaz), and others
  - First meeting: Nov. 2019
  - Key question we set out to explore: What new policies, outreach, or institutions might help the City commemorate its history more fully and accurately — especially where that history is fraught or has been whitewashed or buried?





STANT  
LORELLI  
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LA ISLAND  
LA 775-444-4444

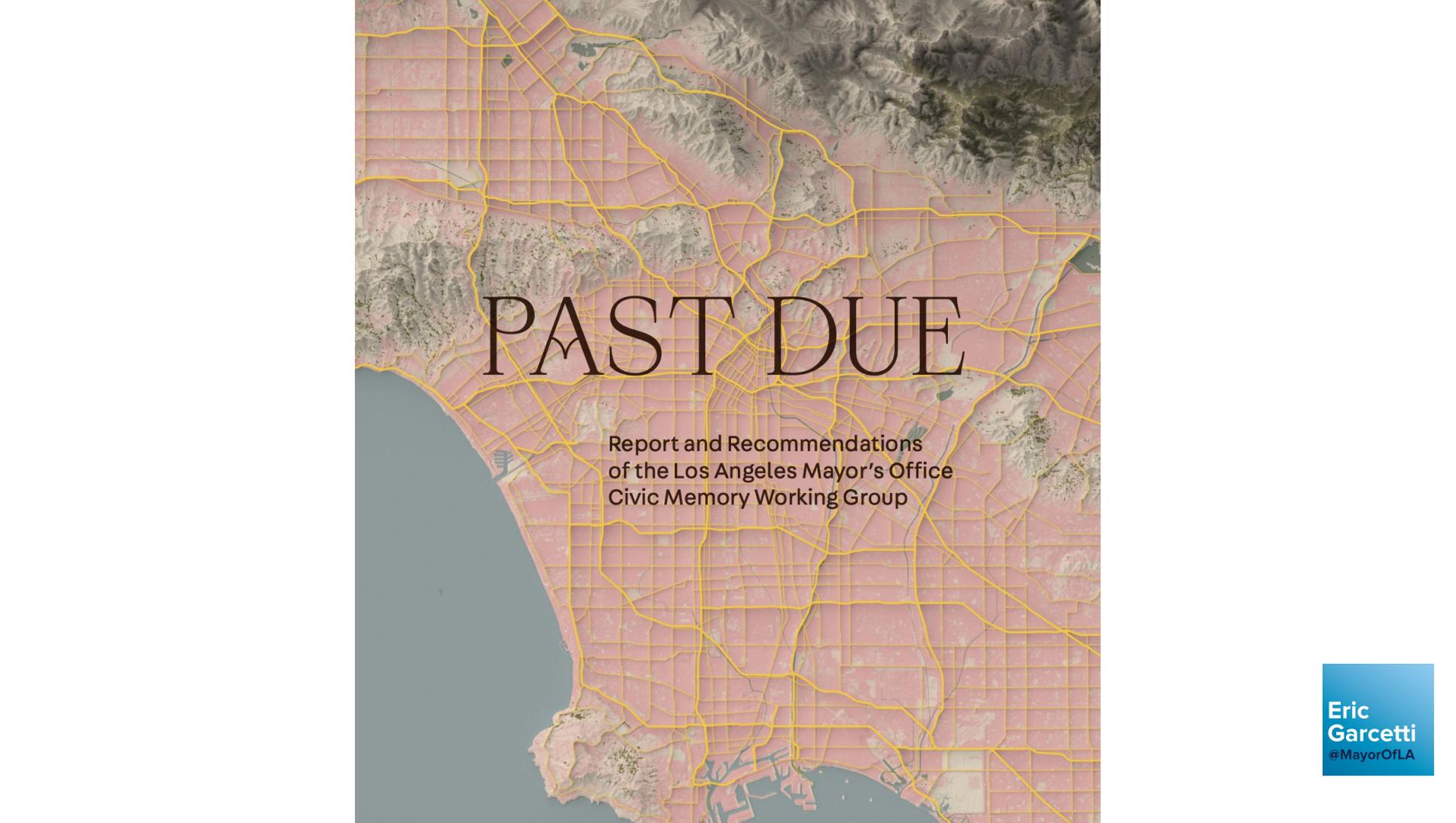
BRYANT  
8

LAKERS  
8

Eric  
Garcetti  
@MayorOfLA

Photo:  
Alex Welsh



An aerial photograph of Los Angeles, California, featuring a semi-transparent pink overlay and a prominent yellow street grid. The title 'PAST DUE' is centered in a large, black, serif font.

# PAST DUE

Report and Recommendations  
of the Los Angeles Mayor's Office  
Civic Memory Working Group



Photography

## The Chicano Moratorium



## The Marathon Continues

Sahra Sulaiman

Shortly before the fall of the Wall, I gave a lecture at the Free University of Berlin. Walking out of the hall, I noticed a plaque above the entrance that said something to the effect that "Dr. Mengele had conducted infamous experiments on human beings here." One of my hosts, a veteran of the German New Left, proudly explained that hundreds of students and faculty had been tear-gassed and arrested during the long campaign to erect the plaque. I was impressed.

Excerpt

## Bad History

Mike Davis

[www.civicmemory.la](http://www.civicmemory.la)

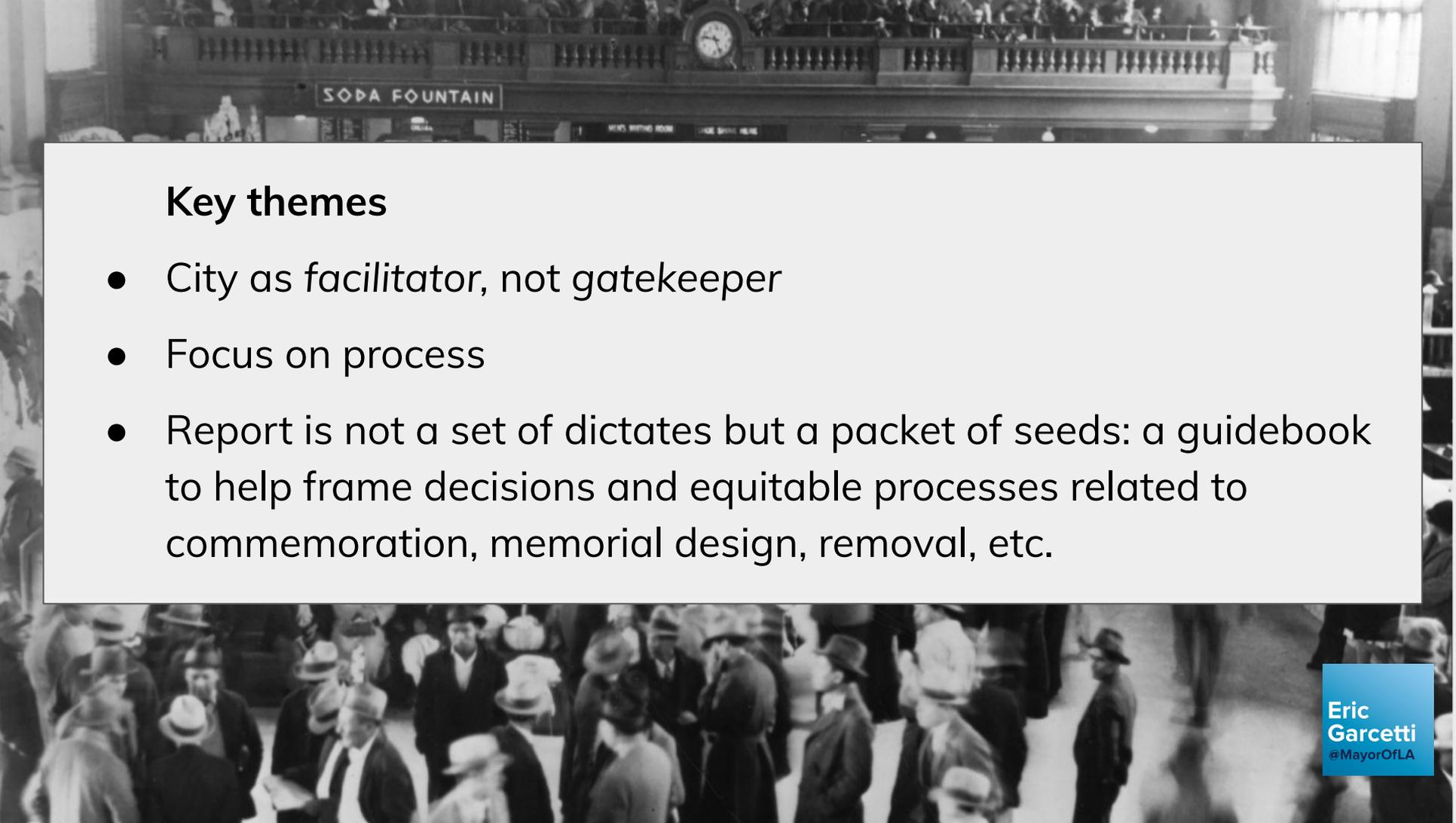
## Results

- 18 key recommendations
- Subcommittee reports, excerpts, newly commissioned writing and photography
- Interviews and roundtable discussions on significant/fraught subjects: Serra, land acknowledgement and land return, Monument Lab, Black architects beyond Paul R. Williams
- Report and recommendations launched and endorsed by the Mayor on April 15, 2021

# Los Angeles Mayor's Office Civic Memory Working Group Design Context



Eric  
Garcetti  
@MayorOfLA



## Key themes

- City as *facilitator*, not *gatekeeper*
- Focus on process
- Report is not a set of dictates but a packet of seeds: a guidebook to help frame decisions and equitable processes related to commemoration, memorial design, removal, etc.

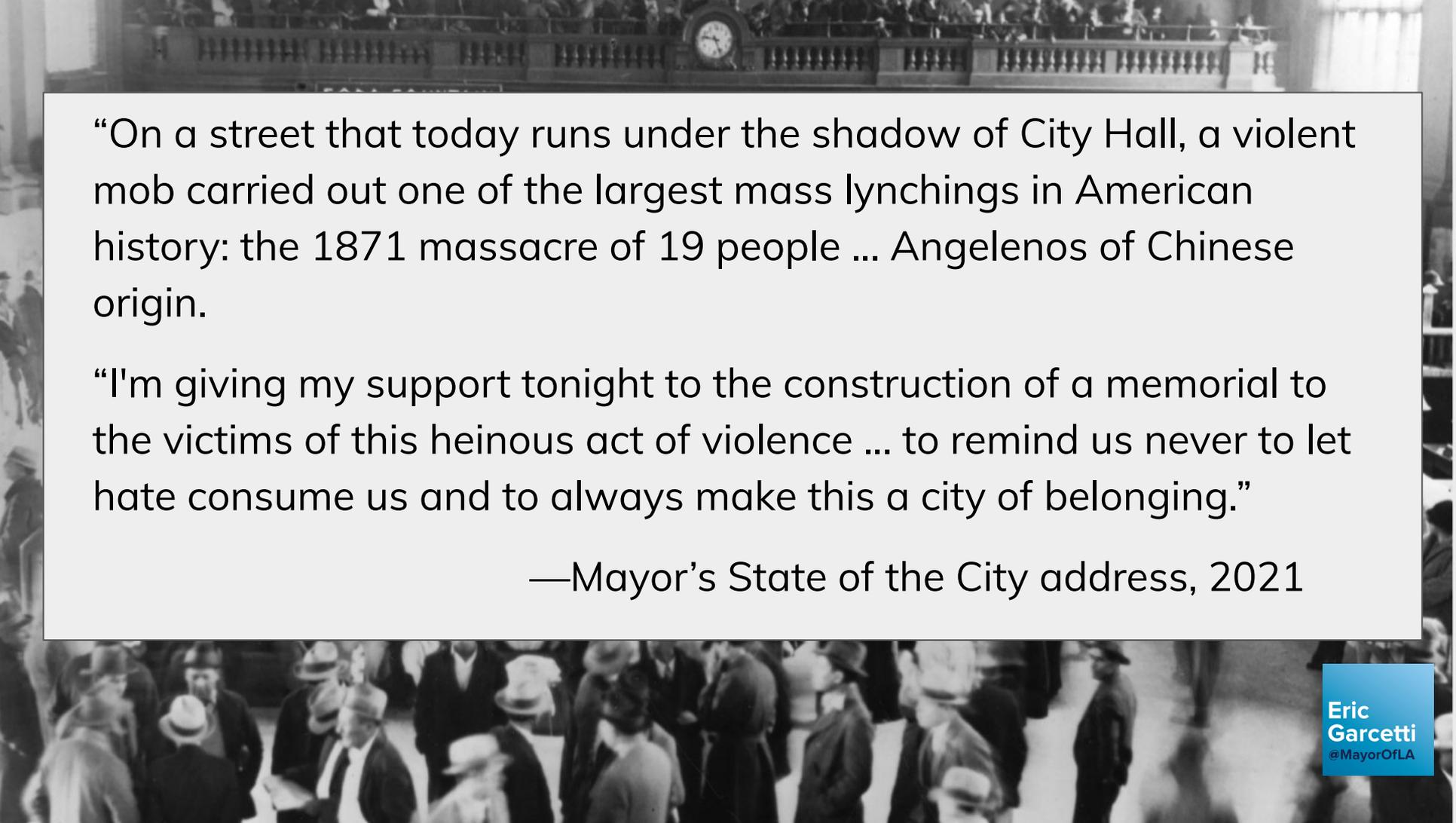


## Other recommendations

- Tools for marking 30th anniversary of 1992 unrest
- Use report to inform COVID-19 memorials and commemoration
- Museum of the City of Los Angeles
- Historically-minded 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games

## Progress so far

- CD13 motion 6/25 on reparative work with Indigenous communities
- COVID-19 Memorial Working Group
- Memorial for victims of 1871 Anti-Chinese Massacre
  - Steering Committee with Chinese-American community leaders, El Pueblo, CD14



“On a street that today runs under the shadow of City Hall, a violent mob carried out one of the largest mass lynchings in American history: the 1871 massacre of 19 people ... Angelenos of Chinese origin.

“I'm giving my support tonight to the construction of a memorial to the victims of this heinous act of violence ... to remind us never to let hate consume us and to always make this a city of belonging.”

—Mayor's State of the City address, 2021



“The most expansive effort comes from the Los Angeles mayor’s office... A responsive local government, united with expertise and support from multiple community-based activists, has begun to reimagine the memorial landscape.”

—Sarah Barringer Gordon and Kevin Waite,  
*Washington Post*, May 24, 2021



“This reckoning with the past is long overdue. Historians are collaborating with groups from outside the ivory tower — in the spaces where research is interpreted and acted on in the present. Getting the history right is among the most urgent moral and political obligations of our day.”

—Sarah Barringer Gordon and Kevin Waite,  
*Washington Post*, May 24, 2021

## Ongoing/next steps

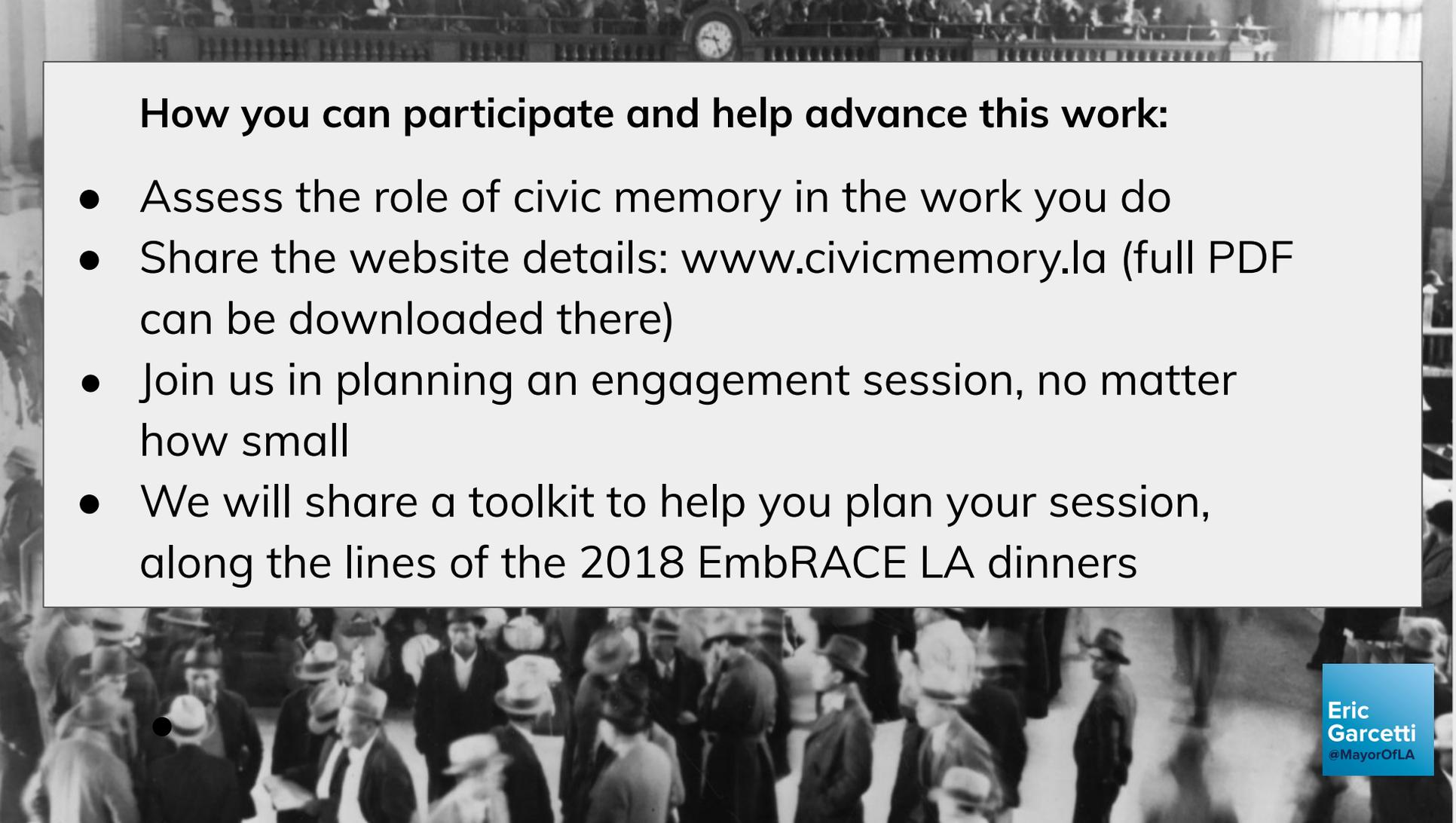
- Presentations so far to City commissions and departments; community groups; institutions pursuing similar work
- In conversation with Deputy Mayor Shockley's research team
- Continued engagement/public discussion across 2021 (Recommendation #1)
- First such event was May 13: Beyond Land Acknowledgement <https://dornsife.usc.edu/3rdla/archive/>





## Particular relevance to RAP:

- Monuments, memorials and statuary on park grounds
- Role of signage and wayfinding
- New ways to learn about civic memory as we move through public spaces
- Indigenous cultural easements and co-management



## How you can participate and help advance this work:

- Assess the role of civic memory in the work you do
- Share the website details: [www.civicmemory.la](http://www.civicmemory.la) (full PDF can be downloaded there)
- Join us in planning an engagement session, no matter how small
- We will share a toolkit to help you plan your session, along the lines of the 2018 EmbRACE LA dinners



[Christopher.Hawthorne@lacity.org](mailto:Christopher.Hawthorne@lacity.org)

**Eric  
Garcetti**  
@MayorOfLA



Questions & discussion