



## Becoming One Fairfax: Envisioning a Racially Equitable Fairfax County

### *A Community Conversation*

June 13, 2018 | 8:30am – 11:00am  
Gum Springs Community Center  
8100 Fordson Road, Alexandria, VA

*The Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers’ Racial Equity Working Group, United Community Ministries, and Fairfax County government brought together funders, government officials, nonprofit leaders, faith leaders, and residents of Fairfax County (specifically, south Fairfax) to learn about current racial disparities in the county and the historical roots of those disparities. Then, participants discussed the systems of power perpetuating inequity and how they can be interrupted, and individually and collectively envisioned a racially equitable region.*

*This document recaps the major themes that arose through the group conversations and individual reflections.*

### Systems of Power – Forces Resisting Change – Major Themes

# of Mentions	Systems of Power to be Interrupted
12	Housing / Home ownership / Home owners’ associations / NIMBYism
11	Electoral system / Political representation / Voting
7	Criminal justice system
7	Schools / Education system / School ratings
7	Employers / Workforce / Hiring practices
6	Financial system / Lending / Banking
5	Government / Laws / Policy
4	Transportation
4	Culture / Media
3	Healthcare system
3	Zoning / Land access
3	Racism / White privilege
2	Religion
	<b>Other:</b> Poverty, wealth, technology, philanthropy, “groupthink”

# Force Field Analysis

Forces Resisting Change	Forces for Change
<p><b>Education system</b>            Education policies/budgets            School Boundaries            Publishers &amp; curriculum developers            Political will/lack of will – school board and board of supervisors</p> <p><b>Employment/Hiring/Workforce</b>            Hiring practices            Workforce investment board            Low wage employers</p> <p><b>Housing</b>            Generational wealth accumulation            Board of realtors            Home/property owners &amp; civic associations            NIMBYism</p> <p><b>Government/Politics</b>            Electoral processes            Government-sponsored reward and incentive systems            Voter disenfranchisement            Barriers to entry in politics            Leadership (privilege and power)            Lack of representation by leaders of color            Bureaucracy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More readily available and accurate information</li> <li>• New leaders and new policies</li> <li>• Individual school board members</li> <li>• Equitable education for all students – Advanced Academic Programs</li> <li>• Equity in resources, boundary reviews</li> <li>• Scaled community college tuition</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing barriers to employment, anti-bias trainings and practices</li> <li>• Ban the Box policies</li> <li>• Respect families and their needs</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tax incentives for Opportunity Neighborhoods</li> <li>• Affirmative housing policies</li> <li>• Promotion of mixed income communities</li> <li>• Inclusive zoning</li> <li>• Affordable Housing Advisory Committee</li> <li>• Civic associations</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demographic changes</li> <li>• New elected officials who are committed to the needs of the community</li> <li>• Community-based organizing to build power</li> <li>• New voter engagement; GOTV efforts for local elections</li> <li>• Removing barriers to voting</li> <li>• One Fairfax policy</li> <li>• Individual members of board of supervisors</li> <li>• Budgets that reflect equity</li> <li>• Funding/supporting nontraditional candidates</li> </ul>

<p><b>Financial System/Economic Development</b>  Predatory lending practices  Barriers to entry in financial system</p> <p><b>Law Enforcement</b>  Police unions</p> <p><b>Religion</b></p> <p><b>Racism</b>  White supremacy  Greed/fear  White privilege, entitlement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equitable access to capital</li> <li>• Assistance to minority businesses</li> <li>• Financial oversight of lenders</li> <li>• Cross-sector partnerships</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police-Diversity Council</li> <li>• Individual police officers/chief of police</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religion</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy</li> <li>• Community dialogue</li> <li>• Nonprofits</li> <li>• NAACP</li> <li>• Building knowledge and awareness among leaders</li> <li>• Creating relationships in the community</li> <li>• Targeted Universalism</li> <li>• Greater inclusivity in community networks</li> </ul>
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## **A Racially Equitable Region Look Like... / A Region Free from Racism Would Mean....**

*themes from group discussions & individual reflections*

### **Inclusive communities & access to opportunity**

Opportunity for everyone

Everyone thrives

Refocus on people

We are ALL healthier, safer, happier, more vibrant, more visually appealing neighborhoods

Regardless of race, everyone is able to reach their fullest potential

Recognize intersectionality

Every child has access to opportunity, regardless of race or residence

Neighborhoods reflect diversity of region

The idea that property is more important than people is eliminated

Visual rainbow of people

Language barriers are removed – access to info in many languages

Engaged, welcome, and empowered people across the region

“People of all races living and working in the same places, marrying each other, future generations so mixed that race becomes irrelevant. Everyone has opportunities based on merit. Equal treatment. More talent in the workforce.”

“One Team, One Family, One Neighborhood where there is access to opportunity, innovation is unleashed, wealth is broadly shared, everyone can achieve their full potential.”

### **Equity in housing, employment, education, etc.**

Higher levels of family-sustaining employment

No disparities in homeownership, poverty, income, educational attainment, etc.

Increased access to educational opportunity

Poverty, income, educational achievement gaps close

No homelessness

Economic prosperity for all, without dislocation

We have quality affordable housing at all price points and for all groups

Schools, businesses, transportation, housing, health care, recreation, and economic development are equally awesome for all people and areas in the County

Access, opportunity and attainment for everyone in education, housing, finance

“We would be the richest community in America – rich in quality of life, rich in economic vibrancy, rich in community collaboration, rich in education, commerce, public policy.”

### **Economic Development & Wealth Building**

Equitable economics

Redefining capitalism

No concentrated wealth or poverty

Equitable opportunities to generate and keep wealth

Empowerment in disenfranchised communities – tackling gentrification

“Businesses would be located across the county offering a full range of services and products to an inclusive community”

Economically vibrant and successful communities

### **Political Representation**

Leadership reflective of diversity of the community

Representative county, city, state government officials

Political representation and access

Power is built and wielded equitably

Schools systems run by a school board that centers on equity

### **Justice System & Law Enforcement**

Fixed justice system

Law enforcement that reflects the community

No fear of police

Fewer people involved in the criminal justice system

Justice and grace would prevail

### **Celebrating Diversity & Addressing Racism**

Addressing stigmas in a meaningful way – bias trainings and cultural competency trainings aren't enough

Comfortable, free, rich dialogue; no fear in discussing racism

Respect and value of diversity of residents

Segregation would be eliminated

Free of all institutional barriers

Cultural biases would no longer exist

Commonality expressed through diversity

We live in an inclusive society where we value, respect, appreciate and celebrate differences

“Neighborhood gatherings would reflect full diversity of our county and we would no longer talk about diversity as a goal, but live inclusively.”

**How a racially equitable region would feel:**

Belonging

Optimism

Happiness

Feel relaxed

Not living in fear – no profiling, discrimination, racial biases

Feel comfortable, just, welcoming, security

You would have choices

You can grow to your full potential without racial barriers

No disparagement on social media

Hopeful and engaged population

Feel empowered and powerful

Excited for the future

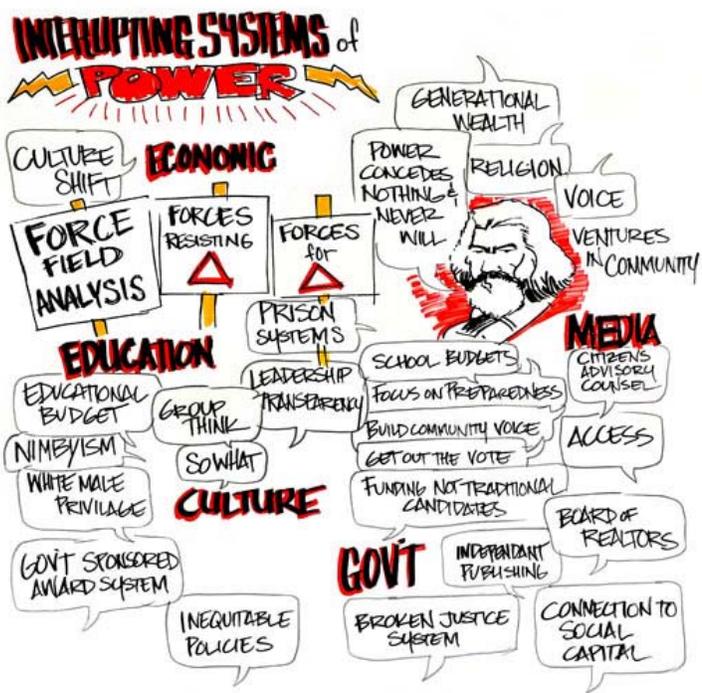
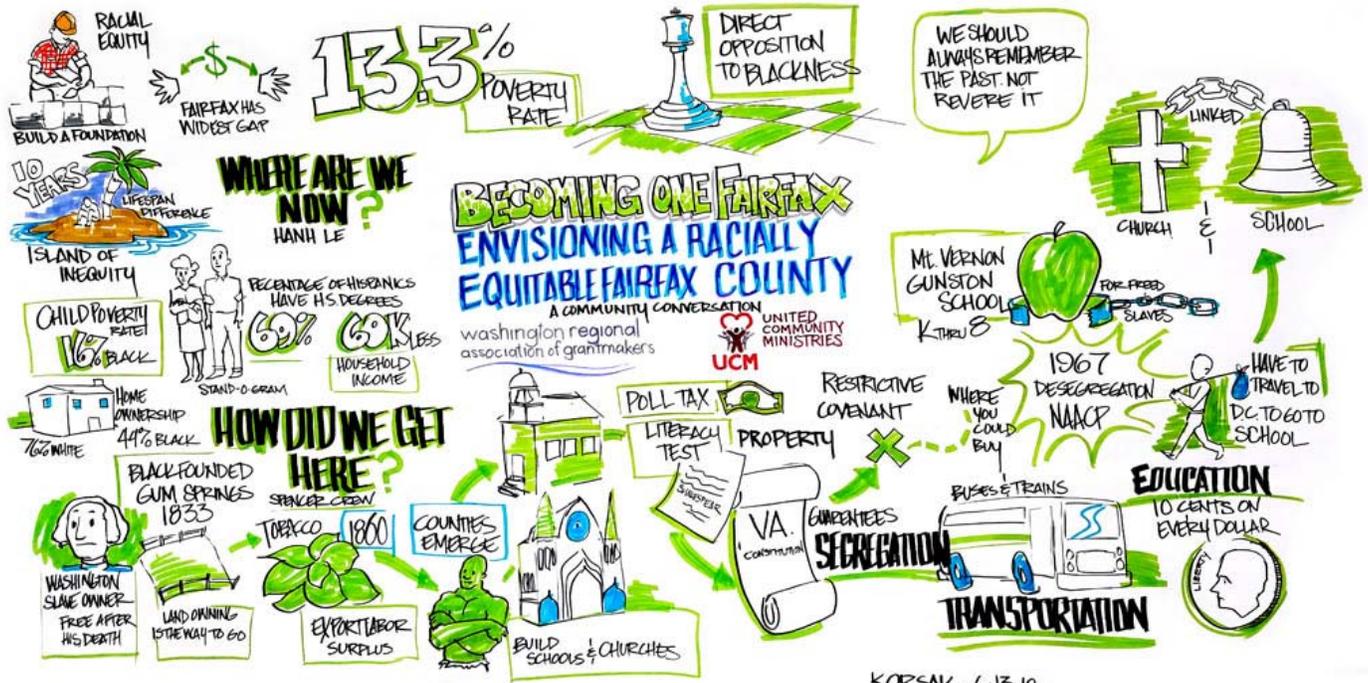
Not having to advocate for rightful place in society

All residents regardless of race and ethnicity believe they can – and actually can – thrive

“People aren’t judged by race. Less worry, less anger, less fear. Taking advantage of everyone’s talent, not shutting anyone out.”

“A racially equitably region would feel welcoming, inviting, one-ness, unity”

Graphic Recording of the Event by Mark Korsak



*Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers' Racial Equity Working Group is a group of 30 funders interested in better understanding how structural racism affects our region and taking strategic actions to dismantle it. This event is one in series of community conversations they are convening around the region to gather input from community on a vision for a racially equitable region. Learn more at [www.washingtongrantmakers.org](http://www.washingtongrantmakers.org).*

*United Community Ministries is a community-based nonprofit offering comprehensive programs and services for vulnerable children, youth, and families in Southeastern Fairfax County. UCM empowers our neighbors in need to transform their lives, providing a vital connection between people in need and the people committed to helping them thrive. Learn more at [www.ucmagency.org](http://www.ucmagency.org).*

*This event was planned in partnership with Fairfax County Government.*

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