

BECOMING

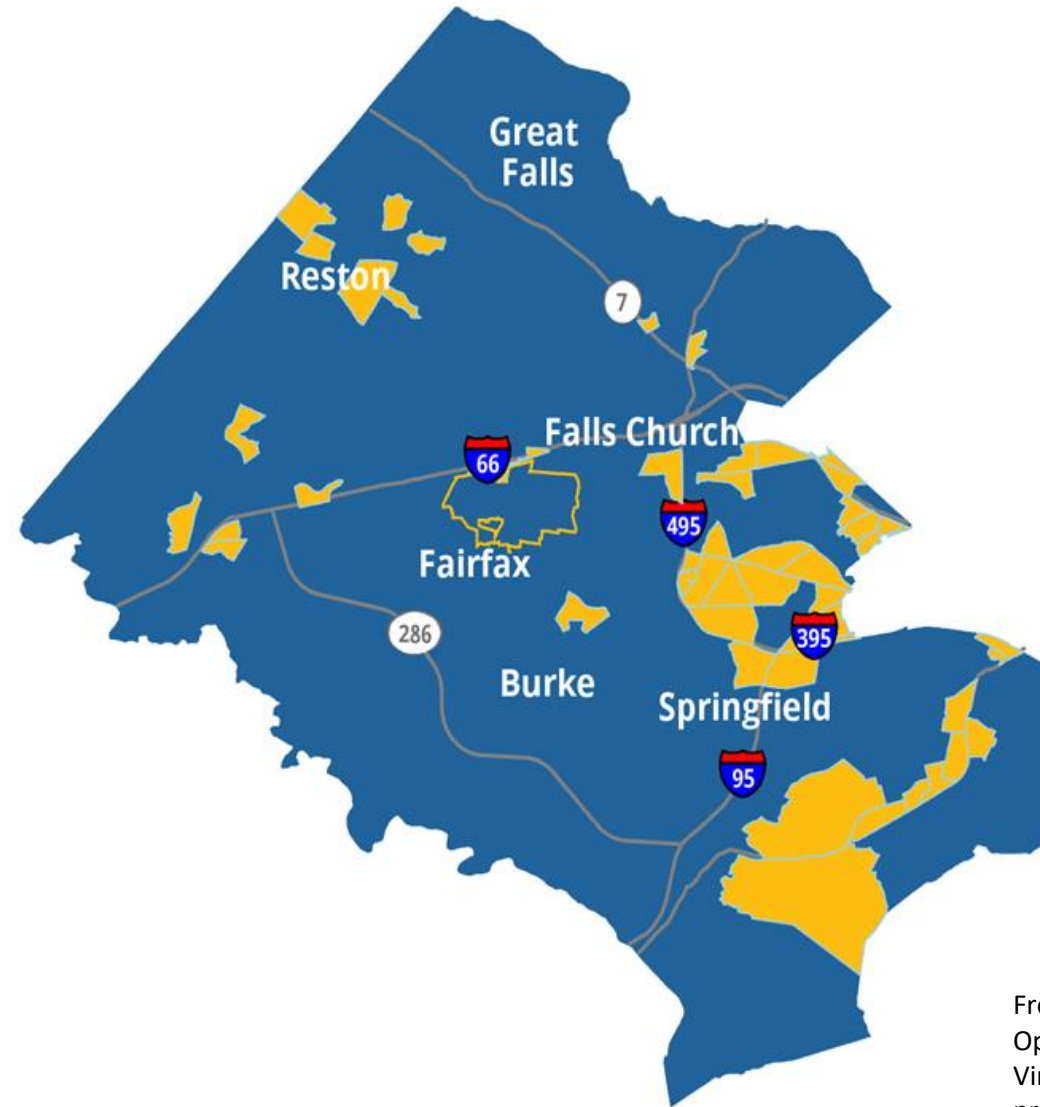
Discussion with the Environmental Quality Advisory Committee

Karla Bruce, Chief Equity Officer, Fairfax County Government

June 9, 2021

There is an “uneven opportunity landscape” in Fairfax County

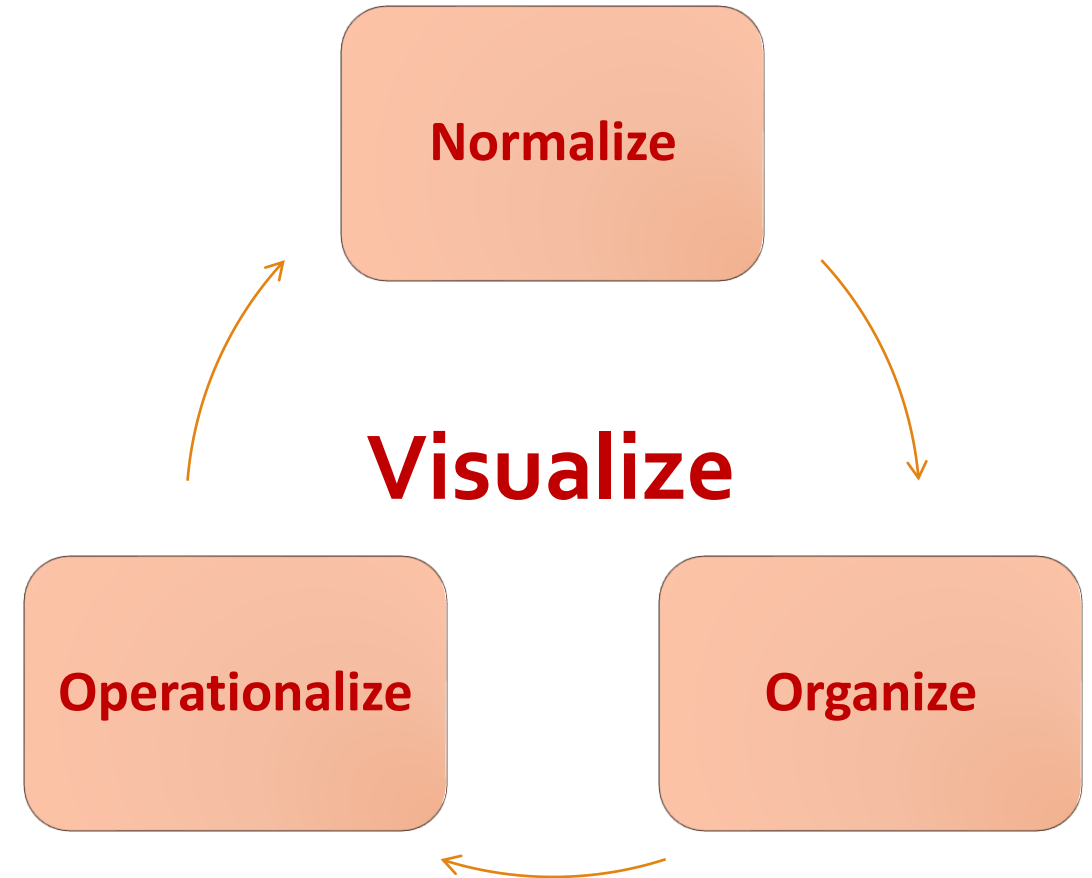
- Reports from the *Northern Virginia Health Foundation*, *PolicyLink*, and *Urban Institute* and our own analysis document **variances in opportunity and vulnerability** within Fairfax County and across the Northern Virginia and Metropolitan Washington regions.
- The most effective solutions must be **place-based** and **system-focused** and **address the spatial inequities** that constrain opportunity and ensure equitable access to services and resources that **promote economic mobility**.



From Getting Ahead: The Uneven Opportunity Landscape in Northern Virginia
produced by The Center on Society and Health with the support of The Northern Virginia Health Foundation
<https://novahealthfdn.org/getting-ahead-report/>

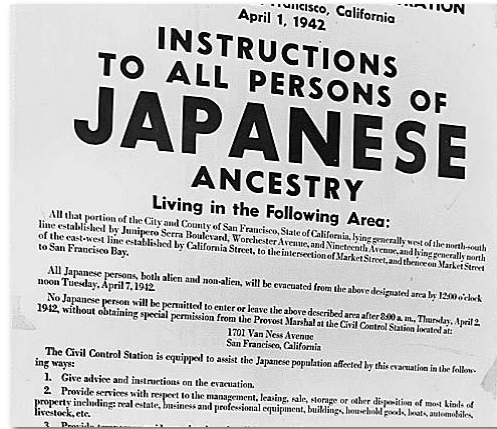
Governing & Managing to Advance Equity

- One Fairfax is a Racial and Social Equity Resolution and Policy committing the county and FCPS to intentionally consider equity when making policies, planning and delivering programs and services
- It's a way to think about and approach the governance and management of the county and involves:
 - Facing our **history** and our current reality
 - Understanding where we are now and **what we want for the future**
 - Establishing clear **priorities** and making explicit **choices**
 - Committing to **bold and innovative approaches**
 - Meaningfully **engaging community and key stakeholders**



History of Government and Race

Initially explicit



Government explicitly creates and maintains racial inequity.

Became implicit



Discrimination illegal, but “race-neutral” policies and practices perpetuate inequity.

Government for racial equity



Proactive policies, practices and procedures that advance racial equity.

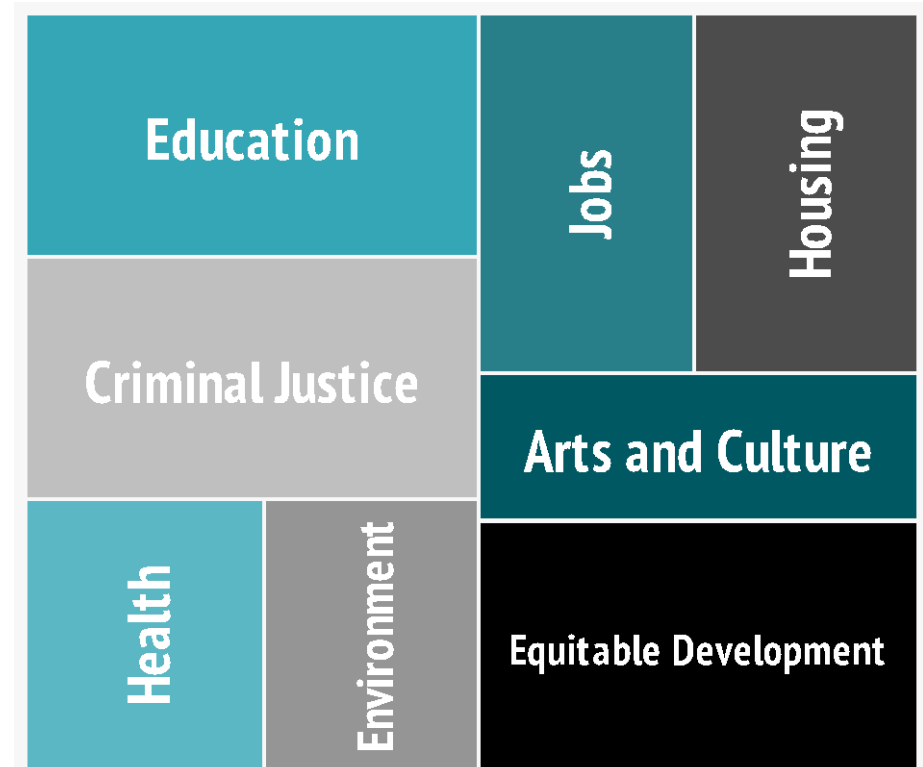
Racial Inequity in the U.S. (and Fairfax County)

Equity exists when one can no longer predict advantage or disadvantage by group identity.

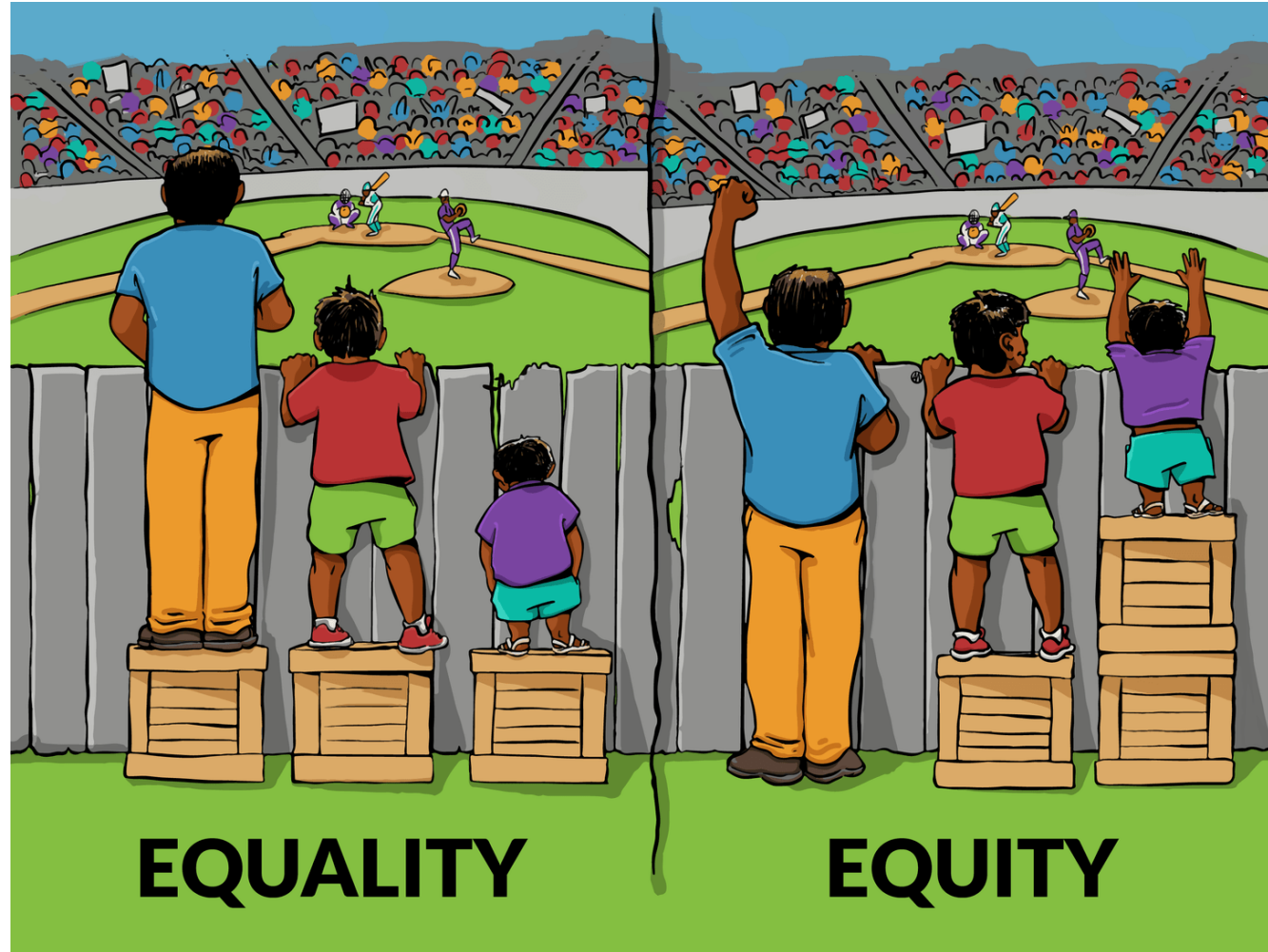
From infant mortality to life expectancy, race predicts how well you will do

So, our focus is on Racial Equity...

- Improving **Outcomes**
- Closing **Racial Gaps**



Equity is **Fairness** not **Sameness**



Equity is **Fairness** not **Sameness** (continued)



EQUALITY



EQUITY

Not the people's "lack" preventing them from participating in the soccer game, it's the unjust system and structure.

Types of Racism

Individual racism:

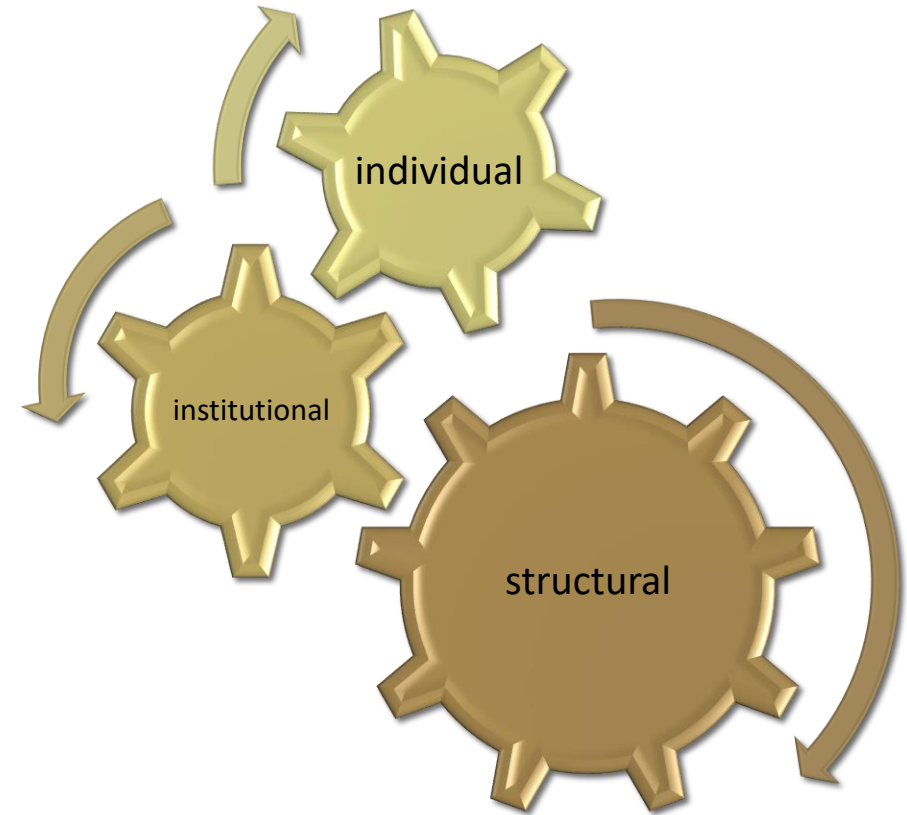
- Pre-judgment, bias, or discrimination by an individual based on race.

Institutional racism:

- Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.

Structural racism:

- A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.



There is an organization-wide focus on Becoming *One Fairfax*



Engagement is key to Becoming One Fairfax

Residents, partners & stakeholders are essential in:

- Articulating how the doors of opportunity have been opened or closed
- Gaining a better understanding of the drivers and roots of inequity
- Shaping the shared values and assumptions necessary for our community to embrace the strategic importance of achieving equity
- Co-creating solutions that advance our progress toward equity



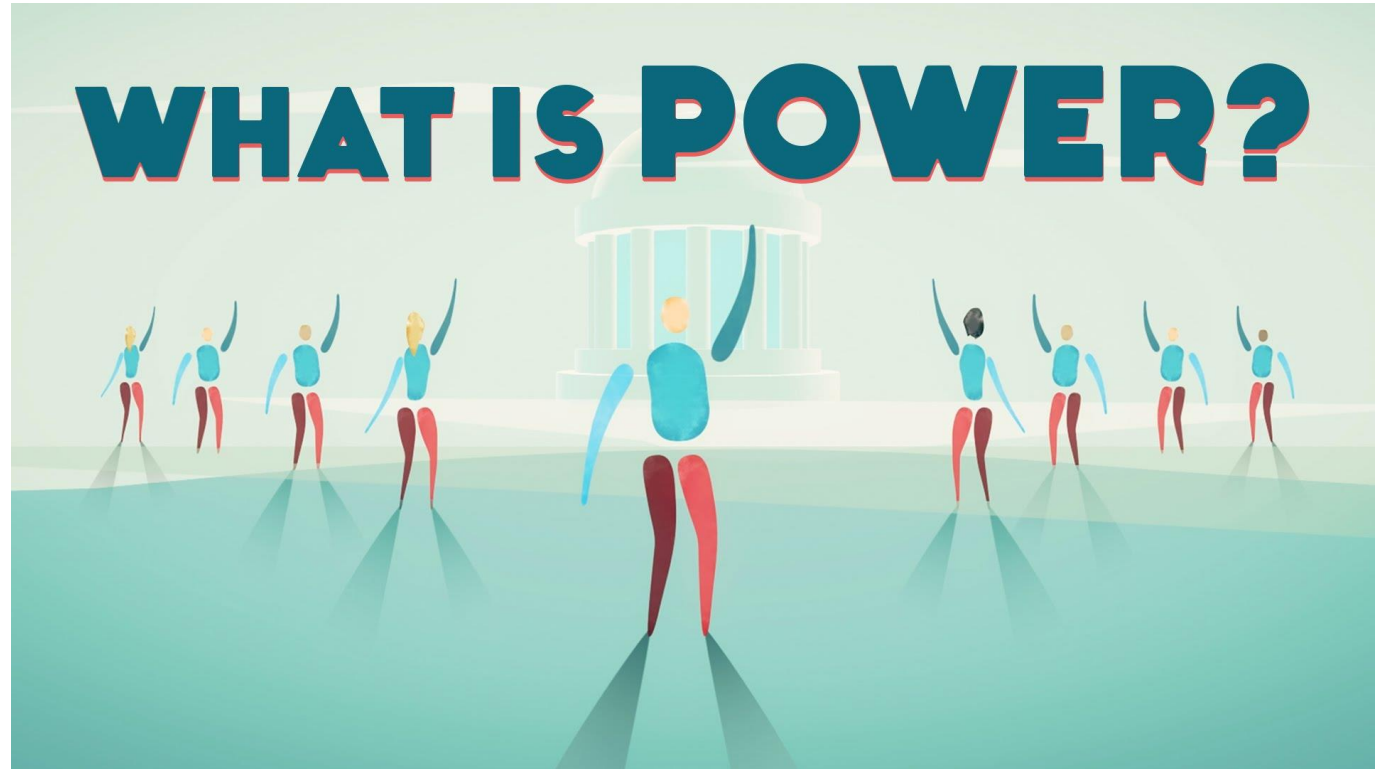
Fostering Inclusive Community Engagement



- Fairfax County's challenges cannot be solved by county government alone. The creativity, diversity and energy of our residents, businesses and community organizations will need to be harnessed if we are to advance equity and achieve success
- A framework for supporting inclusive, accessible and authentic community engagement has been developed to ensure all voices, including historically underrepresented communities, are engaged in the county's planning and decision-making processes.

*Who
participates?*

Who decides?



Power is “The capacity to ensure that others do what you would like them to do. In a civic arena, it is getting the community to take the actions that you want.”

Eric Liu, CEO of Citizen University & Executive Director of Aspen Institute Citizenship and American Identity Program





Placing a strategic focus on turning
“Islands of Disadvantage” into
“Communities of Opportunity”

KEY CONCEPTS FOR
PROMOTING THE SUCCESS OF
ALL NEIGHBORHOODS &
POPULATIONS IN FAIRFAX
COUNTY

The **Countywide Strategic Plan** lays out a community-based vision for the next 10 to 20 years featuring strategies and metrics to advance that vision over the next 3 to 5 years.

Planning will be prioritized to define where we're going together, how we're going to get there, and what we plan to achieve, through the lens of equity.

How are we doing across each of these areas by population and/or by place?

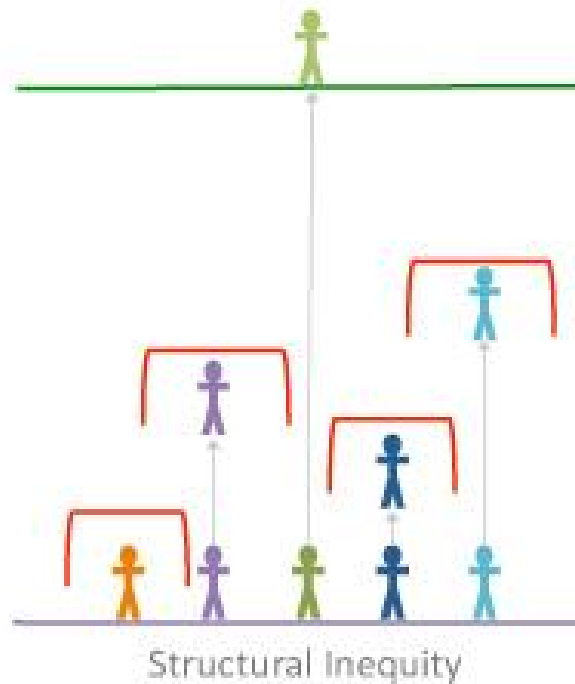


The Principle of Targeted Universalism:

Abandoning a *one-size-fits-all* policy development formula in favor of an approach that is more inclusive and outcome-oriented

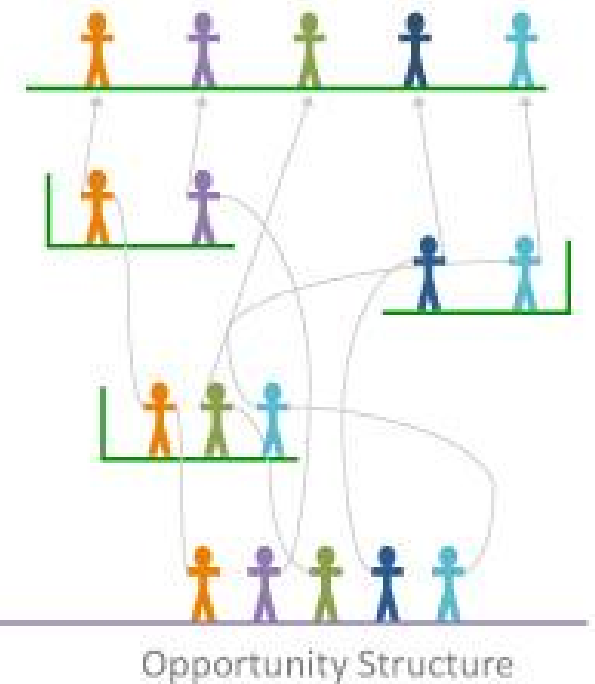
Universal Goal with Targeted Solutions

Structural Inequity produces consistently different outcomes for different communities.



vs.

Opportunity Structures respond with necessary resources and multiple paths needed for different communities & individuals to thrive.



Key Elements of a Communities of Opportunity



EDUCATION



EMPLOYMENT



MOBILITY



FOOD



RECREATION/CULTURE



HOUSING



JUSTICE



HEALTHCARE



DIGITAL ACCESS



QUALITY CHILDCARE

A map of the Washington, DC metropolitan area, showing various cities and regions. The map is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange banner at the bottom.

**Understand Vulnerability
& Opportunity**

An isometric illustration of a city skyline with various buildings, trees, and a body of water. The illustration is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange banner at the bottom.

**Target Interventions
to *Build* Opportunity**

Communities of Opportunity

An illustration of a magnifying glass focusing on a group of stylized human figures. The background is a light blue and white pattern.

**Target Interventions to
Connect to Opportunity**

An illustration of a globe with a green leaf growing from it. The globe is surrounded by water and a small boat.

**Encourage the
Development of and
Participation in an
Inclusive Economy**

Asking Different Questions

Blame Who's a racist?	Causes What's causing the racial inequities?
Intentions What did they mean? What was their attitude?	Effects What were the actions? What are the impacts?
Prejudice What beliefs made them do it?	Systems What institutions are responsible?
Grievance How can we fix what just happened?	Solutions What are proactive strategies and solutions?



Key Takeaways

1. One Fairfax commits the county and schools to intentionally consider equity when making policies, planning and delivering programs and services. It's not a program, it's a process.
2. Equity is fairness, not sameness.
3. Race and Place matter.
4. We aren't just talking about individual acts of bigotry.
5. Institutions rely upon processes and procedures that can perpetuate inequity. We are all a part of institutions and systems.
6. Government has a responsibility for advancing racial equity but cannot do it alone.

Reports and Other Resources

REPORTS

[Getting Ahead: The Uneven Opportunity Landscape in Northern Virginia](#)

[Uneven Opportunities: How Conditions for Wellness Vary Across the Metropolitan Washington Region](#)

[Racial Inequities in Fairfax County 2011-2015](#)

[Health and Human Services Needs Assessment 2019](#)

[Equitable Growth Profile of Fairfax County](#)

OTHER RESOURCES

[COVID-19 Vulnerability Index](#)

[The Opportunity Index for Northern Virginia](#)

[Healthy Places Index: A New Resource for Measuring Opportunity in Northern Virginia](#)

[Fairfax County Strategic Plan](#) (draft)

Fairfax County Public Library [page](#) on social and racial justice

For additional information on One Fairfax, please visit our website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/one-fairfax>



Questions & Discussion
