



THE HISTORY OF RACE & HOUSING IN METRO DETROIT

Where you live shouldn't determine whether you live, die, or thrive.
~Heaster Wheeler,
Executive Director
Detroit Branch NAACP

Race, Residence & Regionalism examines how we live and don't live with one another in Metro Detroit. It addresses the challenges and complexities of this region illuminated by the scars of racial discrimination and residential segregation. Scars as one of the most segregated regions in this country, as indicated by the 2000 U.S. Census. This reality has created a schism in our communities and a profound divide in the wealth accumulation and living space between whites and African

Americans for generations. Segregated housing patterns influenced by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), realtors, insurance companies the banking industry and the hearts of the citizens allowed redlining and restrictive covenants to be business as usual for decades directly impacting where we live, and how we live.

ITS EFFECT ON THE REGION:
David Rusk states in the Cities without Suburbs, 2nd ed. That "racial segregation and isolation of the poor is a critical factor in poor bond ratings, inadequate regional wealth and fiscal crisis in U.S. metropolitan areas." (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Press, 1995)

Until we understand our history, boldly confront the truth and change our pattern of living with each other, we as a region will never aspire to our full potential. We will be unable to attract the best and the brightest from around the world to work, live and build neighborhoods, communities, and cities. We will stunt our regional growth and our ability to compete in this global economy and we will deny future generations from wanting to bring their talents and skills to this state.



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We live our lives trying to gain as much opportunity as our circumstances will allow. Space and place have always been important to pathways (and roadblocks) to opportunity, but they became even more important for the distribution of opportunity after World War II, when national policies began to shape the racial dimensions of housing and economic development. Today, we live with the legacies of a deliberately segregated past.
~ john powell

THE THREE PHASES OF THIS PROJECT

Race, Residence & Regionalism, formerly known as The Housing Project: Truth & Justice is a three-phase project designed to address racial inequities created and perpetuated by the policies of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) in the metro Detroit community. The first phase was a mock trial; the second phase is a truth commission; the third phase will be a regional action project.

❖ FHA & THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT (PHASE 1 — 2008-2009)

Phase one examined the history of housing beginning with the great migration of African Americans from the South to the North leading up to the Civil Rights Act of 1968. We looked at the FHA's role in housing discrimination through its implicit policy beginning from its inception in 1934. We examined the broader context of this history through an exhibit which included understanding neighborhood construction, the 1943 race riot and the 1967 rebellion. The exhibit reflects the lack of access to opportunity which created the ground swell of anger that led to the circumstances of that period, and its direct effect upon our current condition.



❖ TRUTH & RECONCILIATION (PHASE 2 - 2009 — CURRENTLY)

We are creating a truth commission mandated to deeply examine the impact of race and space and create a report with recommendations on regional equity.

The truth and reconciliation process is designed to examine the history of segregation in metro Detroit's past in order to build the foundation for a more unified future. This model of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission is based upon similar efforts around the world, most notably in South Africa, and Greensboro, North Carolina.

❖ REGIONAL ACTION (PHASE 3)

Phase three will be regional action. It will engage stakeholders throughout the region to address the common denominator of regional development and equity. This phase will be directly influenced by the report of the truth commission and the broad based coalition created through our Housing Project partners and stakeholders.



HOUSING PROJECT PARTNERSHIP

The Housing Project Partnership is comprised of representatives from a range of stakeholder groups all needed to advance regional equity. The Housing Project Partnership leaders represent government, business, non-profit, faith community, regional groups, grassroots organizations and media collaborating with the Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion to work on regional equity and housing in Metro Detroit.

PUBLIC EDUCATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Racial equity work operates in a vacuum without public education and community engagement. Effective discourse and transformative change occurs by direct involvement of institutions, communities, and individuals. Michigan Roundtable's education and engagement campaign includes community forums, youth programs and projects, collaborations with academic institutions, grassroots organizations, business, and the faith community to be a part of our collective historical awareness, civic engagement, and regional development. For more information please visit our website.

