

Education




Faith

Hacking
RACIAL EQUITY
IN
GRAND RAPIDS



Develop-
ment



Non-
Profit

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You've probably seen it before. The ten point plan for change, the blueprint for the future, or the public position statement. You see these and you know they're built upon a certain story, a narrative. But you know in your gut the narrative isn't right. Maybe it centers white people and erases Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. Maybe it centers powerful institutions at the cost of communities. Maybe it celebrates individual stories of success like that's how systemic change happens. Whatever it is, you see the flaws in the narrative. Maybe you see it a mile away. And you know it needs to be turned on its head, made into something new. It needs to be **hacked**.

Hacked?

Like illegal activities behind the computer? Like breaking into the mainframe *Mission Impossible* style? Or like Neo in *The Matrix*? Not exactly. When we say "hacking," we mean understanding the **assumptions, failures, and vulnerabilities** in a system. The system is the story. The system is the narrative. The system is the wall. That's what holds things up, sets the conditions, and justifies actions. So it needs to be hacked.

But hacking is different from just critiquing. You're not only pointing out what's wrong, what's missing. You're also tinkering and playing with it to make something new. That's hacking.

That's what we did to make the document you're reading right now. We held hacking sessions with people in Grand Rapids we know and trust. Some of these people we've collaborated with for many years in National Equity Project programming. Other people are allies and co-conspirators of our partners. We hacked public reports about development, we hacked non-profit job ads, we hacked public statements about racial justice, and more. You'll see evidence of these artifacts in some sections ahead, with clear evidence from our hacking session. And in other sections, the artifacts we hacked are a bit deeper, below the surface. You can't see them, but we used the insights from our hacking session to create the sections.

But this isn't just about us, it's also about you. **We want you to hack too.**

How to Hack

1. Get some friends together. At least three.
2. Pick an artifact that needs to be hacked. Like the ones mentioned above. Even job ads and photos can be hacked.
3. Pick a few pages. Go old school. Print them out. Everybody needs a hard copy.
4. Get stuff to write with. Pencils, markers, whatever.
5. Set the clock for 10 minutes. Maybe a bit longer. Everybody works individually. Get to hacking:
 - Re-illustrating
 - Re-writing
 - Making micro edits
 - Annotating
 - Putting something on it

You're playing, tinkering, experimenting -- like you see folks have done right here. →

6. Then, talk with each other. One at a time, share how you hacked the artifact. Point to things you did. Lay it out so people can see. Tell them what you were thinking.
7. Listen to each other. Respond to other people's hack. Make sense together.

You can hold a hacking session on your own, but can also hack this document. In fact, we want you to. We expect you to. That's why in each of the sections, we've built opportunities for you to write on, re-illustrate, and annotate what we created. We are inviting you to hack. You'll know that when you see **This is your invitation to hack!**

Because you're a hacker. Not with a computer but with the story that's being told about Grand Rapids.

Sit with your friends. Sit with your community.

You are a hacker.

Artifacts from our hacking sessions:



Development

Have you seen them? The executive reports. The strategic plans. The blueprints for development in certain parts of Grand Rapids.

Where do they come from? They're usually from wealthy foundations, their non-profits, and the private businesses that fund them. They're from "economic development" organizations put together by these groups. Some of them just got here. Some of them have been here for a long time, doing whatever they do.

You see these development reports and you wonder, where did this come from? Who made this? Or which "community members" did they talk to for input? Because they sure didn't talk to you.

Then you read it. Maybe you see yourself in it. Or maybe you don't. Maybe it's about development in your community. Or maybe it ignores you and your community. Maybe when you see it, it's like plans are already in motion — a version of the future without you or your community. Too late.

But it's not. There's something else you can do. You can hack it.

That's what we did. We brought together a group of community members to hack a report about developing the east bank of the Grand River downtown. The report was released on February 24, 2021 by Grand Action 2.0, a not-for-profit "economic development" organization co-chaired by Dick DeVoss, Carol Van Andel, and Tom Welch. We hacked the Executive Summary section of this report.

We wrote questions on the report, like why these reports center "economic development" and not human development. We crossed out the word "minority" and inserted words like Indigeous, Black, and Latinx. We re-illustrated the report, drawing pictures of flourishing lives in the sectors of Grand Rapids the report left empty, blank, and white. And we talked with one another about what we did.

In the pages that follow, you'll see some of what came from that process. Especially the hopes, dreams, and viable futures voiced by those in our hacking group.

And at the end of this section we'll invite you to express your own hopes and dreams for the riverfront right on these pages.



"I NOTICED BUZZWORDS THAT IRKED ME, LIKE THE TERM 'MINORITY.' PEOPLE OF COLOR, WE ARE THE MAJORITY."

"THE PHRASE 'LACKS ACTIVATION AND CONNECTIVITY.' IT'S LIKE NOTHING IS HAPPENING THERE IF WHITENESS DOESN'T PUT A VALUE ON IT."

"IT READS AS IF THE CITY WERE DEAD, AND NOW WE'RE GOING TO SWEEP IN AND CHANGE IT."



Executive Summary

2021 represents a unique moment in time for the City of Grand Rapids and the surrounding region.



The Design Team focused on providing public open space and strategic mixed-use development accompanied by the corresponding infrastructure and circulation improvements that would optimize and activate the riverfront sites. This process was led and funded by Grand Action, working together with the City of Grand Rapids and Skot Welch of Global Bridge Builders to engage the community in an open and transparent process.

The goal was to create a catalytic vision that will improve quality of life for today's Grand Rapidsians and guide the next phase of downtown development for the next generation. A collaborative effort undertaken by Populous and Progressive AE has resulted in the following project recommendations for the riverfront sites:

- 10+ acres of new public open space connected to the Grand River
- Alternatives for new pedestrian connections to the west side of the Grand River
- The Grand Rapids "Green Ribbon": an elevated and dedicated riverfront park connecting to the river trail system between Fulton and Wealthy Streets
- Adventure park, kayak pit-stop, zipline and seasonal attraction or cultural park
- Community green space to accommodate multi-generational gatherings and activities
- Ground floor retail and trend-forward mixed-use prioritized for minority-owned businesses
- 12,000-seat amphitheater on 201 Market Site
- Up to 1,500 - 1,750 mixed housing units, with a dedicated site at Wealthy and Market Ave for affordable housing on the park and river
- 1,675 new parking spaces to support mixed-use and other functions
- Recommended sites for future downtown development of housing, soccer venue or aquarium



Executive Summary

2021 represents a unique moment in time for the City of Grand Rapids and the surrounding region.

The purpose of the Riverfront Conceptual Planning effort was to create a comprehensive vision for future development on the east bank of the Grand River between Fulton and Wealthy Streets, transforming it from a site that lacks activation and connectivity into a showcased, sustainable district that connects and serves a diverse community.

With millions of dollars of public / private investment in downtown in the past 10 years, Grand Rapids Whitewater implementation underway, and major businesses and universities taking root in downtown, it's time for Grand Rapids to consider how it can build and sustain this unique momentum. Diversifying downtown and the regional economy as well as attracting and retaining talent are vital objectives.

While many reports and studies have been commissioned by a variety of stakeholders over the years, no cohesive master plan for the entire 31-acre riverfront site has ever been created. This Riverfront Conceptual Planning effort considers all elements of the site together, including the Fulton and Market Site, 201 Market Sites, the riverfront, Market Avenue Corridor, as well as new supportable market uses identified by CSL in 2020 as part of the Grand Rapids Destination Asset Study. These uses could include:

- Amphitheater
- Traditional Mixed-Use District
- Trend Forward Mixed-Use
- Outdoor Adventure
- Signature Public Space
- Arts and Culture Park
- Urban Water Features
- Outdoor Education Center
- Immersive Art Experience
- Downtown Aquarium
- Unique Hospitality Experience



Executive Summary

2021 represents a unique moment in time for the City of Grand Rapids and the surrounding region.



"There are so many groups not even listed on here. There's just a lot of missed opportunity to include everyone's ..."



“What would it look like if there were a thousand interviews with Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in Grand Rapids?”

“What if dozens of community focus groups took place?”

“What dreams, desires, and futures would surface?”

**MY KIDS CAN
BREATHE AND
PLAY
OUTSIDE**

**I DREAM OF
AFFORDABLE FOOD
MARKETS THAT HAVE
CHAYOTE SQUASH,
CASSAVA AND
PLANTAINS NEAR
ME**

**AFFORDABLE
HOMES WHERE
I KNOW MY
NEIGHBORS**

**I CAN WALK
AND DRIVE
WHILE
BLACK**

**I CAN
WORK
WITH
DIGNITY**

What are your dreams and your desires for the riverfront?

What futures do you imagine in this place for you and your community?

Write them in the open bubbles.

This is your invitation to hack!

Nonprofits

They're everywhere.

They've got their hands in everything: housing, education, health and wellness, and more. In fact, no matter where you are, they're hard to get away from. Especially in Grand Rapids.

We're talking about the nonprofits.

They're not all bad. They're just everywhere, taking up lots of space, lots of air, and lots of resources.

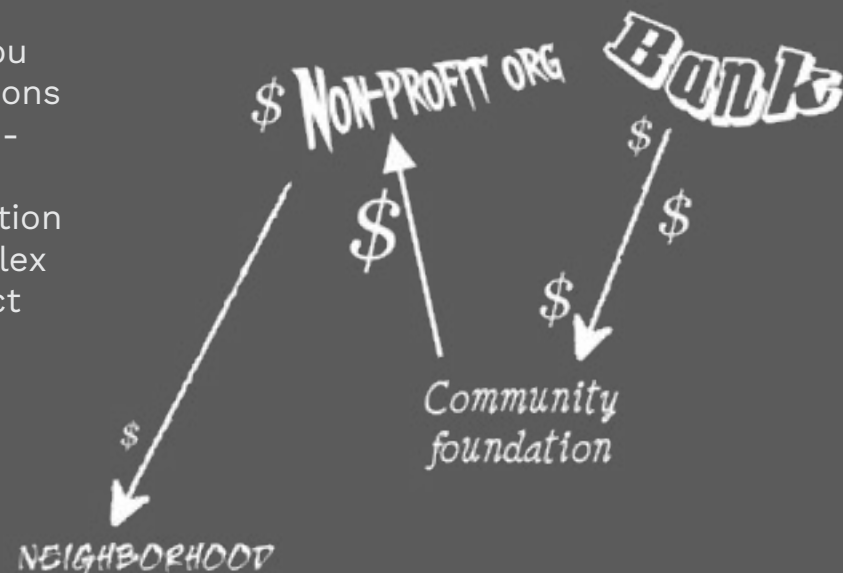
And nonprofits do a lot of MANAGING. They manage what people can do, where resources go, and what gets done with land. Some nonprofits say they serve the community, but they serve their funders instead. They do things TO communities. Not with them.

That's what this section is about.

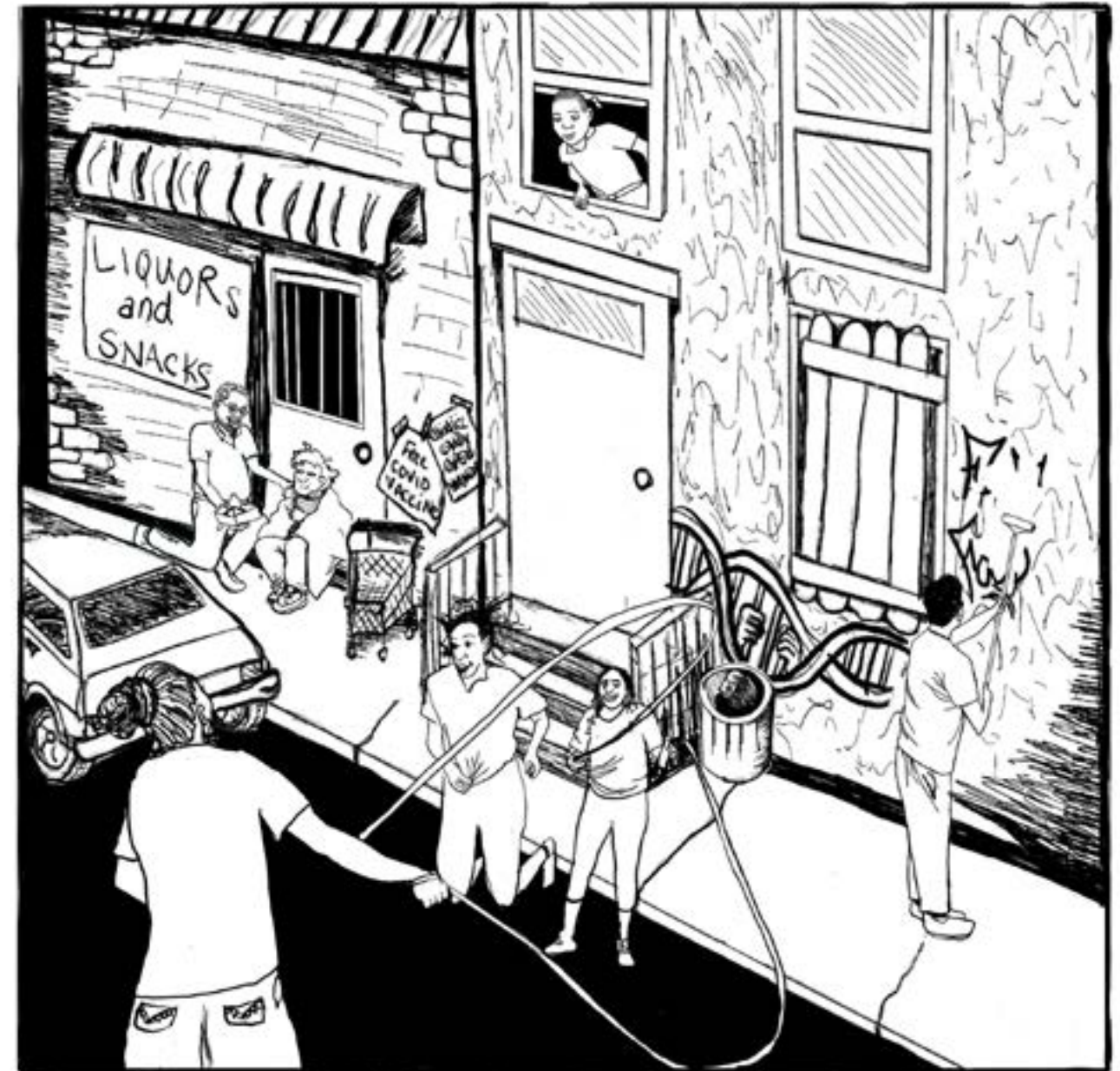
We brought together activists who know this space between nonprofits and communities. We used their insights to create what follows, a comic about the nonprofit industrial complex and one specific issue: food sovereignty. Though we focus on this particular issue, the comic illustrates the larger conflicts between nonprofits and community activism.

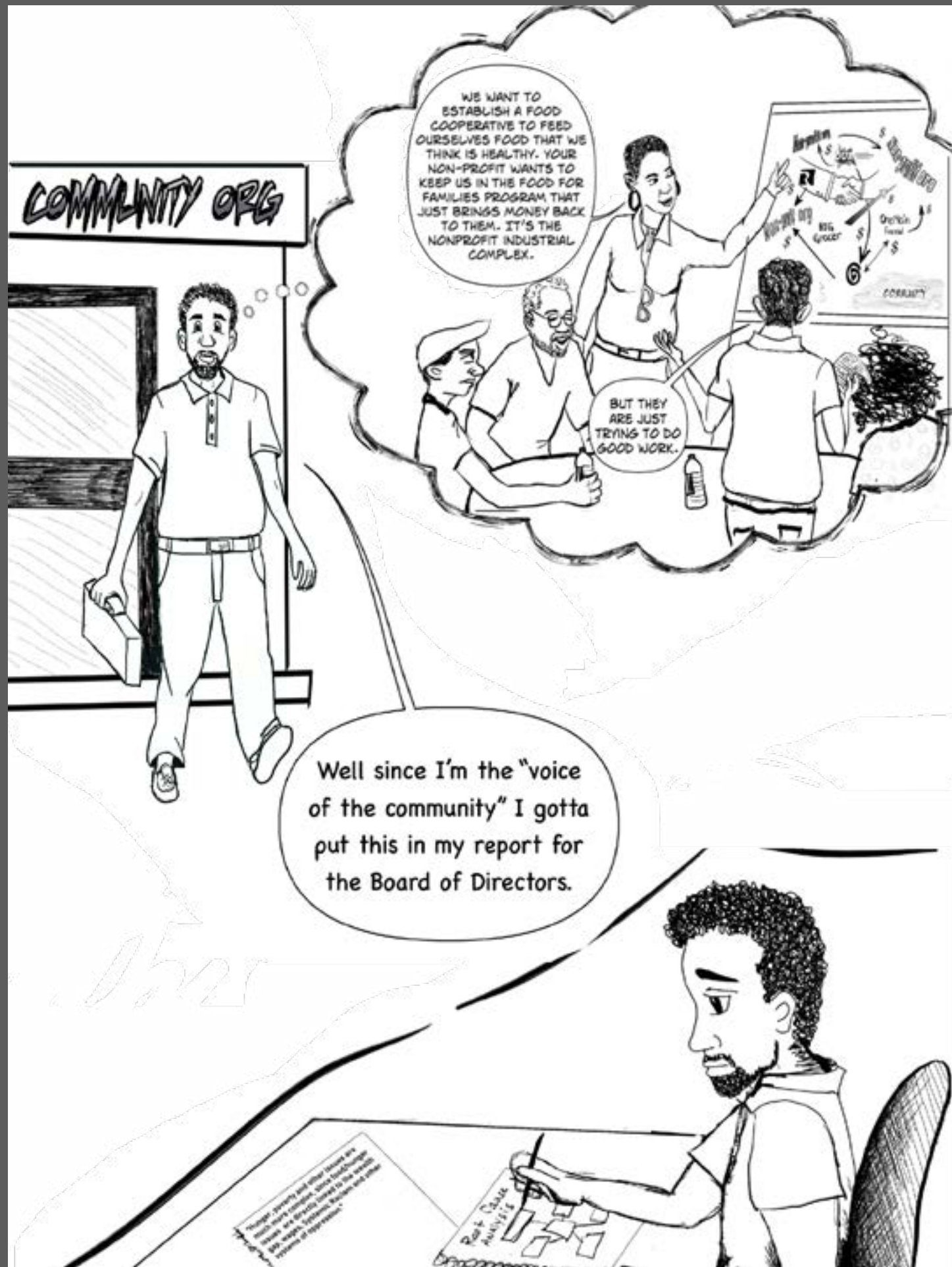
It's a comic, but there's nothing funny about it.

At the end of this section, we'll ask you to think about what kinds of connections among community assets make something like food sovereignty attainable. We'll ask you to activate your imagination outside the nonprofit industrial complex as you arrange, rearrange, and connect assets.









"Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations."

– Declaration of Nyéléni, the first global forum on food sovereignty, Mali, 2007.



What would make food sovereignty in your community attainable? What would it take? We ask this question to activate your imagination outside the nonprofit industrial complex on one specific issue. Because it's one thing to critique the problem. It's another thing to explore a solution.

Here's how to explore:

The next two pages list different assets or resources. Some might support food sovereignty, others might not. There are also two blank spaces for you to write in ones you think should be there but aren't.

Gather a group of friends. Talk through each asset or resource. It's okay to not know what some of them are or how they work. Ask each other. If nobody knows, look them up. That's part of the process. Come to a shared understanding.

Then cut along the dotted lines to separate each square. Now you've got pieces to move around.

Lay the pieces out in front of you. Start arranging them to show different relationships. Move them around to show different connections.

Which are related?

Are some interdependent?

Do some generate from others?

Which are primary, and which are secondary?

Can some only exist when reinforced by others?

Throw out the ones you think are not necessary or might undermine collective power.

Write in ones that are needed but not there.

This is your invitation to hack!



Community land trust

Farming cooperative

Time bank

Mutual aid network

Nonprofit organization

Bank loan

Volunteers

Grocery store

Credit union

Community garden

Tool lending library

Participatory leadership

Lending circles

Farmer's markets

Cooperative economic
education

Foundation grants



Faith

In the beginning were Black Lives, and they Mattered.

What would happen if you made this statement in front of your congregation? Would people stand up and walk out, furious you made a “political” statement in church? Or would they lean in and listen, curious about your remixed verse from the book of Genesis?

Asking what would happen -- that’s really the question right now. It’s the question because white supremacy, anti-Black racism, and Christian nationalism remain fixtures of American evangelicalism.

Some faith leaders are digging in, fighting this good fight. A fight against systemic oppression of all kinds. A fight for the liberation of all people. Maybe you’re one of them. Maybe you’re not. Or maybe you’re not one of them yet.

We brought one such group together. A group of faith leaders in Grand Rapids. Together, we hacked a statement released by the Grand Rapids Association of Pastors (G-RAP), who describe themselves as “a coalition of pastors from across the denominational, racial, and economic spectrum committed to work toward unity, reconciliation, and justice.” And some of the people in our hacking group are also in G-RAP. Their statement was released ten days after Derek Chauvin murdered George Floyd. It was written during a flurry of protests against systemic racism and anti-Black violence around the world, and in Grand Rapids. The statement is called “Racism is What’s Breaking Out Community.”

From the insights that came during our hacking session, we made three new translations of this statement.



Why translations?

Because translations of sacred texts matter in faith communities.

Some translations are for accuracy, others for readability, and yet others for the beauty of language. Some things are lost in translations. Others are gained. Like Black lives, translations matter.

And so do interpretations. People read, study, analyze, and interpret scriptures. These interpretations cause splits, divisions, and schisms among the faithful.

In the pages that follow are the original statement by G-RAP and three untitled translations of it. In each translation, something is lost, gained, and different. Like a close study of scripture, you should read across these translations and look for the differences -- some loud like a shout, others quite like a whisper -- but each mattering for how you understand racial justice in your faith community. After you read each translation, take a moment to give it a title based upon your interpretation.

But there’s one more thing. The last translation isn’t finished. That’s where you come in. At the end of this section, we’ll invite you to finish the last translation -- your translation -- by filling in the empty lines and making it yours. It will be your translation about faith and racial justice.



Original G-RAP Statement

As Christian leaders in Grand Rapids, we want to stand together to name the painful moment we are in. Our hearts were again traumatized as we witnessed the murder of yet another black male. This man had a name: George Floyd. We heard bystanders pleading with the police officers to stop pressing against his neck. We heard the emotional, helpless cry of a man dying under the knee of police officers. And of those who witnessed his death.

We are moved to respond. We must respond individually, to search our hearts for how God is calling us to change the racism that we have internalized. We must respond as a community here in Grand Rapids, to hold our police officers and city officials accountable to policies which protect the dignity of black and brown people. And we must respond nationally to the overwhelming injustice of racism and the failure of those in power to lead with justice. Our Scriptures tell us that all people of faith are required by God "to act justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

The pain of this moment is palpable—we see it, we hear it, and we experience it. Our compassionate God, who dwells among us, feels this pain. The anger, rage, and violence that has broken out in our city is part of this pain. We want destruction to stop. Violence begets violence. And we need the root of this to be faced. Racism is what is breaking our community.

Each of us as religious and civic leaders must work to right this wrong. In Scripture, it is called repentance -- turning from our wicked ways, and resolving to walk in a new direction. We must speak out and be visible, amplify the voices of those who are most impacted and who are leading us toward a more just community.

We, the clergy of Grand Rapids, believe that God is able to work in this community, to make a way out of no way. We believe that God can reconcile us one to another, that God can heal our city and heal our nation. And we recognize that pain is always a part of true healing. We resolve to work together, across the lines that have divided us. We resolve to use our power and platforms to name the legacy of systemic racism that has traumatized people of color.

We love Grand Rapids. We pray for its peace. We know that peace comes with justice.

"May justice roll down like a mighty water, and righteousness like an ever flowing stream."

Translation

As leaders in Grand Rapids, we know we have helped cause the painful moment we are in. We witnessed the murder of yet another Black man. We were those bystanders pleading. We were the police officers pressing against his neck. We were the man dying. We were his death.

We are late to respond. We must acknowledge our complicity. We must sit in discomfort and search our hearts for how God is using the racism that we have internalized to change us. We listen to the community here in Grand Rapids, to build relationships, remove barriers, and get out of the way of Black and Brown people. But we don't know how to hold police officers and city officials in our congregations accountable. Our ideas about justice too often start and end with the Ten Commandments. And so our response has been to continue the injustice of racism and fail to lead with justice. Our Scriptures often tell us whatever we choose to hear and help us make comfort into our god.

The pain of this moment is elevator music. We hear it in the background and easily ignore it. Our church leaders teach us to stay clear of politics. We live in "good" neighborhoods and send our kids to "good" schools. As a result, the anger, rage, and violence that has broken out in our city is very distant from us. If people stop protesting injustice, we would likely go back to "normal," because the wrongness of racism is normal for us.

Each of us as religious and civic leaders must work to right this wrong. In Scripture, it is called repentance -- turning from our wicked ways, and walking back toward God. Like God, we must listen to the voices of those who are most impacted. Like God, we must then speak out and take a side. As He does, we must make ourselves vulnerable. And we must follow those who are leading us toward a more just community, no matter where they worship -- or if they worship at all.

We, the clergy of Grand Rapids, believe in a God who can make a way out of no way. And we have used this as an excuse to relieve us from the duty of allowing that transformation to happen where it's most needed: not "out there," but within us. We've avoided facing our failings. We've been unwilling to accede power. We've never truly resolved to repair the harm we have done. We just keep doing that harm, and doing it in the name of God.

We love Grand Rapids. We pray for its peace. And we pray that we as leaders will not be at peace until there is justice.

Translation

As Christian leaders in Grand Rapids, we heard you say you are going through a painful moment. You say you witnessed the murder of a black man named George Floyd. We saw a very difficult situation unfold with a growing crowd of angry protesters and law enforcement officers doing their best to maintain control and do their job. The end result was a tragedy for everyone involved.

We realize we should respond. We should respond individually, to search our hearts for how God is calling us to change the sin we have internalized. We should respond as a community here in Grand Rapids, to respect our police officers and city officials as they work to protect all people in our great city. And we must respond nationally to the overwhelming disregard for authority and for following the rule of law. Our Scriptures tell us that "Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God."

We understand there is much pain at this moment. Our righteous God also sees this pain. The anger, rage, and destruction of property that has broken out in our city is part of this pain. Our God is a God of peace, and this destruction of property needs to stop. Violence never solves the problem. Instead, people should turn the other cheek. And we need the root of this problem to be faced. Sin is what is breaking our community.

Each of us as religious and civic leaders has a role to play. In Scripture, it is called having faith, believing that only our omniscient God knows all, and we must trust Him that all things will work together for good. We must lead from the pulpit and not from the streets, calling our congregations to reflect, pray, and trust that God's goodness will prevail in our city and nation.

We, the clergy of Grand Rapids, believe that God desires us to live in peace. The sinful divisions that exist in our community and our country can only be healed by God, and by obedience to God's plan. We must be patient, and allow for God's perfect timing. We must remember that our primary identity is in Christ, and not defined by one race or another. We must be willing to allow God's will, not ours, to be done. We must be humble, and pray for the unity that can only come from Jesus.

We love Grand Rapids for its peace. We know that peace comes from obedience to God and his authority. "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right."

Here is the final translation. It's unfinished. That's because it's your translation. You have to finish writing it.

What does your faith tell you about racial justice? How does it call you to respond -- individually and collectively? How do peace and justice come about? These are the kinds of questions you'll have to think about to finish the translation.

We invite you to finish the translation by writing in the empty page and making it yours.

Or even better, gather a small group of people from your congregation. People you worship with. Talk, reason, discern. Write your translation together.

As Christian leaders in Grand Rapids, we want to stand together to name.....

Our hearts were again traumatized as we witnessed.....

This man had a name: George Floyd.

We heard.....

We saw.....

We felt.....

We are moved to respond. I must respond individually by.....

We must respond as a community here in Grand Rapids by.....

And we must respond nationally to.....

Our Scriptures tell us that all people of faith are required by God to....

The pain of this moment is.....

Our compassionate God, who dwells among us, feels this pain.

The anger, rage, and violence that has broken

out in our city is....

We want destruction to stop. Violence begets violence. And we need the root of this to be faced.

Racism is....

Each of us as religious and civic leaders must work to....

In Scripture, it is called repentance -- turning from our wicked ways, and resolving to walk in a new direction. We must.....

We, the clergy of Grand Rapids, believe that God is able to....

We believe that God can.....

And we recognize that pain is always a part of true healing.

We resolve to work together, across the lines that have divided us.

We resolve to use our power and platforms to name.....

We love Grand Rapids. We pray for its peace. We know that peace comes with....

Your Translation



This is your invitation to hack!

Education

Right now there are a lot of mad white people. Especially white parents. They show up and show out at school board meetings, demanding a ban on critical race theory -- that isn't even taught in schools. But anyway. White rage isn't new. It shows up when Black, Indigenous, and People of Color assert their dignity. It shows up when the accumulated debt of systemic racism starts getting repaid, ever so slowly. White rage over diverse books, integrated schools, and any curriculum with a critical consciousness. White rage over educator and school leaders' efforts toward racial justice.

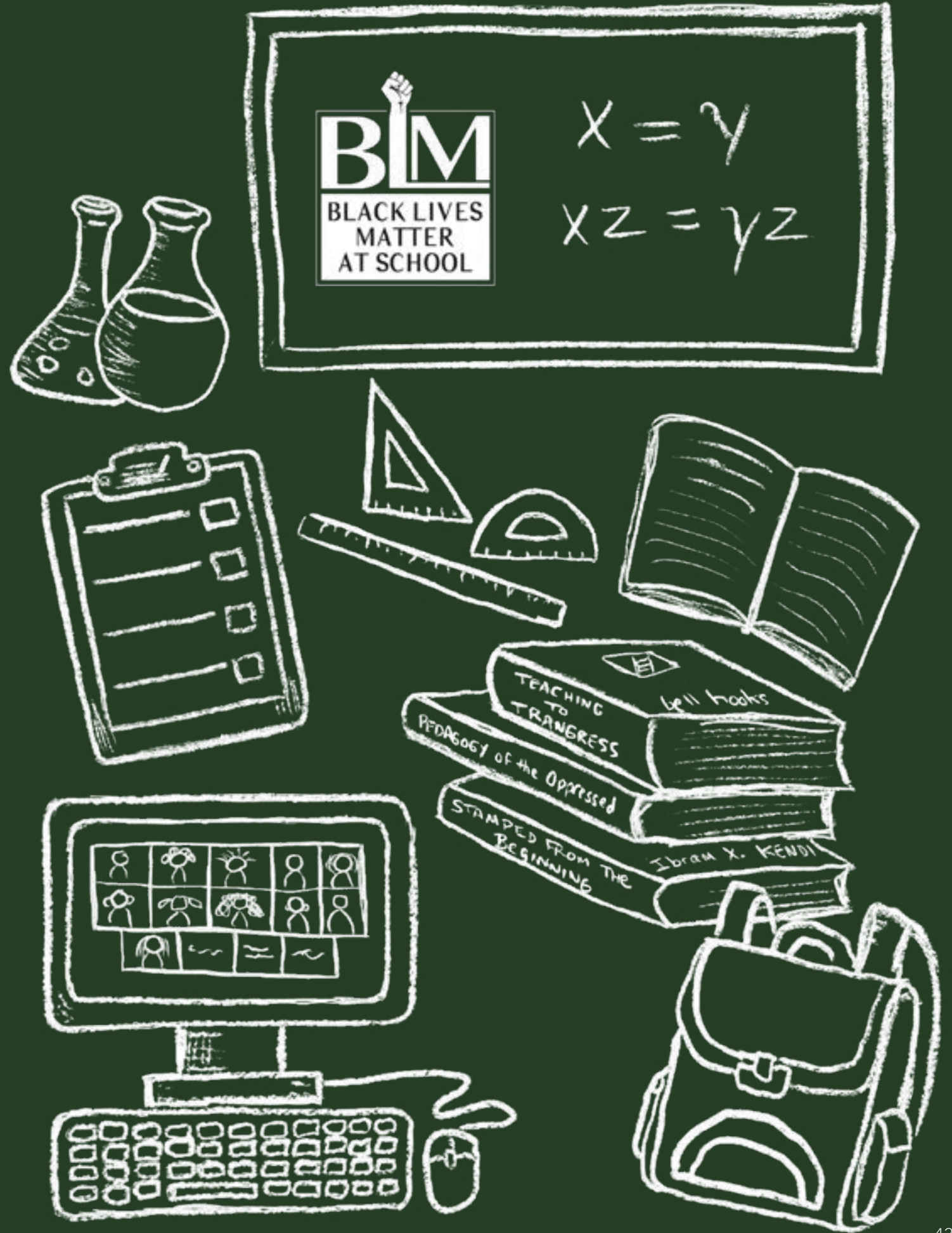
We brought together a group of educators and school leaders doing the work of racial justice in Grand Rapids. We hacked a monthly email update sent out by a school superintendent. Why this artifact? Why something so mundane? Because top down decisions like the ones communicated in such updates prevent districts from moving forward on their equity plans. Specifically, this update announced the renaming of the district's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion efforts to Equity and Student Success. The reason? "Everything we do is about helping students succeed."

The insights of this hack made us consider how racial equity work gets calibrated to the people who are least committed to it -- their comfort, their sensitivities, their resistances. It can be like planning to change at the speed of the person at the back of the line who is dragging their feet because they don't want to be there in the first place. The insights of this hack made us consider the ways that districts protect white people's feelings at the cost of advancing racial justice. The hack made us think about how this protection happens by scrubbing words like "intersectionality" and "systemic oppression" from district websites and planning materials.

The insights from the hack also made us think about how educators and school leaders find their way out of these problems: how they organize for change despite top-down leadership, learn from successful education justice movements in other places, and come to see the assets around them that are necessary for this change.

The path along this way isn't always clear. You often feel like you're Stuck Improving.¹ But there are some footpaths worn by others. So in this section, we offer some of those steps along that path you can take.

¹ Irby, D. (2021). Stuck improving: Racial equity and school leadership. Harvard Education Press.



Sit with three students who have been suspended or expelled from school. Ask them what schools can do to better support them. Ask what you can do to better support them. Ask because you are curious, not to extract information to solve a problem. Listen without offering solutions. Show your appreciation for them sharing with you. Sometime after, share what you learned with a coworker.

If you're white, sit with a small group of other white staff members you trust. Even if it's only one other person. Discuss a specific example of how you've let down a student, colleague, or parent of Color. Be honest and vulnerable, but resist feelings of guilty. It's a conversation to process and learn.

If you're white, let one of your Black or Brown colleagues know you want to do better having their back. Ask them, "What's something specific I can do to have your back?" Ask clarifying questions if needed, but do your best to believe what they're saying. Apologize that you haven't done your best. Then do better at having their back, especially in public.

Talk with a group of Black and/or Brown parents who are mad as hell. Listen to what they say. Ask because you are curious, not to extract information to solve a problem. Resist the urge to offer solutions. Show your appreciation for them sharing with you. Sometime after, share what you learned with a coworker.

If you're white, sit with a small group of other white staff members you trust. Discuss how you might better support the dreams of students, colleagues, and parents of Color. Try out a small solution. Then come back and discuss how it went.

Practice using race and ethnic specific language when talking about equity problems: Black, African American, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and so on. Refrain from using words like diverse, urban, minority, and underrepresented to describe students. Do this in your next conversation about racial equity in your school.

Interview a small group of people who have organized to successfully change school policy to support Black and Brown students. It might be teachers at Seattle's Garfield High School, who won a battle against a useless standardized test in 2013. Or it might be community members in Chicago who established Greater Lawndale High School for Social Justice in through a 19 day hunger strike in 2001. Talk with them. Learn from their experience.

This is your invitation to hack!

Endtroduction

We made this product with certain people in mind: equity leaders who we have worked with in Grand Rapids, leaders of Color, and our nonprofit peers who hold similar commitments to equity and justice. Like us, these groups know that policy and evaluation reports are often separate from people on the ground engaging in this work. The reports are passive documents that don't do much. So we wanted to create something active. We wanted to create a product that might invite people to directly interact with it. We didn't know at first what it would be. Maybe an exhibit or experience. Maybe an event. Maybe public art. We decided on the product you hold right now.

We got here by putting ourselves through a design process facilitated by Derute, a majority Black and women-owned consulting cooperative. The process made us think about the stories that should be told from our work in Grand Rapids, why we think these stories should be told, to whom, and for what possible outcome. The process made us think about our own theory of change regarding leading for equity and the spheres of influence that extend from there. The process made us reengage with collaborators in Grand Rapids and develop new connections during our hacking sessions facilitated by Derute.

There is a lot missing from this document that you might expect if you are familiar with evaluation and policy reports. There is no executive summary. There is no list of recommendations for change. There are no profiles of individual community change makers. There are no highlighted institutions making a difference. There are no detailed statistics on equity to assist business and municipal leaders. All of those are easy to find in other kinds of reports.

What you do have in this product is a process, sensibility, and invitation all around hacking. The invitations at the end of each section emerge from our theory of change: that leading for equity requires seeing, engaging, and acting differently – both inside and beyond institutions. For this reason, the invitations ask you to see, engage, and act – sometimes individually, but often with the people around you.

The invitations and this product are an expression of our theory of change. Since social change is emergent, so is this document. You fill in some of the gaps, rewrite what's wrong, cut things up and rearrange them. Literally. We hope you will.

About National Equity Project

The National Equity Project is a leadership and systems change organization committed to increasing the capacity of people to achieve thriving, self-determining, educated, and just communities. Our mission is to transform the experiences, outcomes, and life options for children and families who have been historically underserved by our institutions and systems.

Learn more at www.nationalequityproject.org

About Derute

Derute Consulting Cooperative is a member-owned and democratically-governed cooperative headquartered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. We support organizations committed to racial justice as they advance their work with Black and other communities of color. We accomplish this by providing equity and justice-oriented organizational and leadership development; training and workshops; participatory research, assessment and evaluation; and program design and implementation support services. We are a certified women-owned enterprise and certified minority-owned enterprise, founded in 2014.

Learn more at www.deruteconsulting.com

Placeholder for NEP logo



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