

# **Fairfax Racial Equity & Social Justice Committee's** **Vision & Mission Statement**

**Adopted May 6th, 2021**

## **Indigenous Heritage:**

The Racial Equity and Social Justice (“RESJ”) committee pays respect to the Miwok peoples, past, present, and future, and their continuing presence in Marin County and throughout the Miwok diaspora. We acknowledge that we are located on the un-ceded ancestral lands of the Coast Miwok people of present-day Marin County and offer our care and gratitude for the land, water, air and living beings here. We are committed to resisting colonialism and our ingrained colonial mindset and the imbalance with Mother Earth by honoring Miwok heritage through the support of indigenous-led programming. In addition, we fully intend to move deeper than land acknowledgements and performative actions, towards truly honoring the Coast Miwok Heritage, making that heritage *Visible* and *Present*. We commit to that by elevating and taking part in opportunities to make policy change and participate in direct actions related to Indigenous Rights. Thank you to the members of the Coast Miwok Tribal Council for your consultation in the drafting of this Land Acknowledgement.

## **Background:**

The summer of 2020 saw a nation-wide movement for Black Lives, the catalyst being the murder of George Floyd. His slow murder over the the course of 9 minutes and 29 seconds was at the hands of those who had sworn to protect and defend. This modern-day lynching awoke both our country and our community to action. It was not an isolated incident but the result of four hundred years of injustice firmly grounded in racist policies, which continue into our present. Protests, demonstrations, and marches moved our nation and our town, waking many to the deep destructive power of white supremacy. This committee was inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, and indirectly from every struggle in our national history which has sought to protect and advance human and civil rights. This committee is indebted to the Black Lives Matter movement for mobilizing the Fairfax community to take action to build and support equity for all races, religions, ethnicities, abilities, classes, sexual orientation or gender identities.

Immediately following the murder of George Floyd, “Black Lives Matter” regular protests were

held in Fairfax. Citizens began to mobilize, reaching out to partner and align with anti-racist organizations and other social justice causes. At one organized rally, activists blocked a main intersection by laying down for 8 minutes and 46 seconds, and capturing the attention of the town and the media. This created heightened tension in the town and a range of diverging opinions were voiced at town council meetings. Community leaders, community thinkers, and local activists engaged in frequent dialogue throughout this time and the ideation of a racial equity and social justice committee was born. It was agreed a long-term commitment was needed from the town to create an anti-racist community, one that invites and nourishes diversity.

**Vision:**

The Racial Equity and Social Justice Committee establishes Fairfax's Vision for Equity. This committee visualizes Fairfax as an Anti-Racist town where a person's race, religion, ethnicity, ability, class, sexual orientation or gender identity are not predeterminants of the quality and safety of their experience as a resident, employee or visitor. We envision a town where economic mobility and equity for Black and Brown and all marginalized members of our community is made possible through specific opportunities to address the policies which have historically excluded them. This committee envisions a seismic change in which the community unites in solidarity in a continuing effort to identify and eliminate racist and discriminatory policies, practices, and cultural messages and norms that reinforce differential outcomes based on one's identity; where public education focused on antiracism teaches ways to prevent racism and discrimination and interrupt it when it arises. And we seek to create a town where our education, policing, housing, policies, and reparation efforts reflect these ideals. We understand that when we work toward equity and equality for those most marginalized and wrongly criminalized, specifically the Black community, the quality of life for all people is improved. Therefore, the RESJ remains firm in our vision of an anti-racist Fairfax where Black Lives always Matter.

**Mission:**

We exist to eliminate racial and social injustices in Fairfax by developing an actionable framework through subcommittees, including those focused on 1) Community Education and Engagement, 2) Police Practices and Public Safety Alternatives, and 3) Town Policy and Economic Programs. We will strive to identify racial inequities in our town and take immediate action to create policies and solutions designed to address these issues. We will consult and partner with other anti-racist organizations and towns throughout Marin to bolster our vision. We are committed to ensuring all policies within Fairfax are analyzed and, if necessary, revised

until they firmly reflect our town's commitment to anti-racism.

As members of the RESJ, we are each individually committed to persistent self-reflection as we work to dismantle specific policies which have and continue to systemically and negatively impact racial equity and social justice. We undertake this mission with the understanding that when you lift up marginalized communities everyone benefits. An anti-racist Fairfax is a healthier and more stable Fairfax for *everyone* within our community.