

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS...

BALTIMORE FAMILY ALLIANCE & AUDACITY GROUP
COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSION



SYNOPSIS

WRITTEN BY: AUDACITY GROUP

Baltimore has a strong creative class, influential community leaders, and grassroots organizations that are actively tackling the major challenges facing urban cities across our country.

And, against all odds, they continue to gain small wins and etch the blueprint for sustainable solutions.

We are the heroes we have been waiting for because Superman is not coming to save us.

During a global pandemic, under the weight of officers' knees, and in the face of governmental theft and lawlessness people have grown tired and are beginning to understand

*"I TRUST ARTISTS
BECAUSE THEY
REMEMBER BALTIMORE
WHEN IT HAD MORE OF
A FOOTPRINT, AND
THEY HAVE
MAINTAINED THOSE
RELATIONSHIPS." -
RESIDENT*



that no one can solve Baltimore's challenges better than the people of Baltimore.

There is a growing movement of everyday people coming together and manifesting the change they envision for themselves and their families.

As James Baldwin so eloquently put it, "Time is up, and the rent is due."

Today, we have arrived at the moment where we have to say what we mean, and mean what we say.

Why are so many compassionate, brilliant, problem solvers being forced to fight against their partner organizations for adequate funding and resources?



"MY FAITH IS HOW I GOVERN MY TRUST" ~ BALTIMORE RESIDENT

- Why are the decisions that impact the most underserved communities being made without those who are the most impacted in the room?

If sustainable solutions are what Baltimore (and cities across America) are searching for, then this report outlines the answer.

Our city leadership and the business community must listen to the direction and counsel of our black artists/creatives and the leaders of our community-based grassroots organizations.





KEY FINDINGS

There is work that is being executed on the ground every day by community leaders and grassroots organizations. They have established relationships and engaged stakeholders while putting forth the effort to build trust among residents.

But, their groundwork is often disrupted by a decrease in grant funding because new organizations with less experience and no institutional knowledge are awarded funding for programs that already exist.

- Could we redefine the grant structure by encouraging philanthropic groups to incentivize collaboration? By offering grants that support collaboration among organizations, we could ensure a larger sum of money and sustainable change.

- Could we create a coalition or infrastructure for Baltimore Transplants (e.g., ambassador program...orientation class... community resource course) of trusted artists and city leaders who offer context to Baltimore's grassroots community and strategically align new residents with Baltimore's existing efforts.
- It was recommended that Baltimore establish a "Community Board" or an "Advisory Group" to represent neighborhoods throughout the city.
- Similar to New York's community boards, it was asked if Baltimore could appoint trusted artists/creatives, grassroots organizations, and journalists to assess the needs of their own neighborhoods. Then, they meet with city agencies and make recommendations in the city's budget process to address them.



WHAT DOES A HEALTHY BALTIMORE COMMUNITY LOOK LIKE?

- More Community Policing
- Softening school culture
- More after-school programs and rec centers for children
- Learning Workshops (e.g. soft skills, handwriting, etiquette classes, field trips, etc.)
- More programs like "Bmore Me" that allow children to identify the humanity in themselves.
- Business Development
- More providers with diverse methodologies

"I TRUST ARTISTS TO CHALLENGE OUR PERSPECTIVES AND ENLIGHTEN US." ~RESIDENT

- Skills bank
- Anti-recidivism Programs
- Open housing
- Accountability and trust between neighbors
- Peace Keepers
- A vehicle that passes out information to touch a wider audience
- Greater community inclusion
- Mental health resources and support
- Financial literacy programs

WHERE ARE BALTIMORE RESIDENTS GATHERING THEIR INFORMATION?

- Neighbors
- Talk Radio
- Non-Profit Community-Based Grassroots Organizations
- "Authentic Voices" vs. Corporate in the community
- Social Media Platforms of Trusted Voices
- Our employers
- Other Parents
- Integrated non-profit boards
- Blogs
- Newspapers



WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

- I want to see more community farms
- I want to see more home ownership
- I want to see better greenspace
- I want to see faith-based organizations and non-profits collaborate in a strategic way to affect the lives of Baltimoreans.
- I want to see more black business storefronts
- I want to see cleaner neighborhoods and community policing
- I want to see more discipline
- I want to see more kindness and respect
- Safe spaces for changemakers to plan, to build and reflect
- More social programs boys and girls club
- More trade schools
- More after-school programs and rec centers for children
- Mentorship & Passing of Generational Knowledge
- I want to see Baltimore welcome youth voices

