

C THE CENTER

FOR BLACK EXCELLENCE AND CULTURE

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, BUSINESS ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT & TALENT ATTRACTION & RETENTION GOALS OF THE CENTER

The following is a brief overview of the Center's goals in supporting economic development, business enterprise development and talent attraction and retention goals. A core purpose of the Center is to focus on supporting small business development. In particular it will be focused on, but not limited to cultural and creative class businesses and organizations. In partnership with the business community, another major purpose is to assist in attracting and retaining Black talent in our community.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- // With its location at Park St. and Badger Road, the Center will be part of the continued revitalization of the Park St. corridor that the City has outlined as a central development goal.
- // It strongly co-anchors with Madison College at the beginning of the Park St. corridor. It will be a highly visible iconic, development immediately adjacent to the expressway.
- // It will draw an immense amount of activity and positive attention to the area with its programs by attracting tens of thousands of visitors each year to the corridor and the City.

BUSINESS ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

- // A central goal of the Center is to coalesce the development of Black-owned businesses and social enterprises. Its particular focus will be toward cultural, creative class, and knowledge-based businesses, organizations and entrepreneurs.
- // The project will have a significant amount of space allocated for the Center for Black Enterprise – a combination coworking space / incubator space / business development center.
- // We project the Center for Black Enterprise can support the space needs of 30-50 entrepreneurs, businesses and social enterprise startups.
- // We would work with other organizations in the business development space to provide wraparound support services for these businesses and organizations.
- // Helping to create a culture and space for Black entrepreneurs to thrive will be a primary focus of the Center.
- // The space will be designed to be highly flexible and able to adapt to the needs of these organizations over time.
- // Given its focus on culture and the arts, the Center will be particularly focused on supporting young and emerging Black artists in creating pathways to monetize their art form. We will build in a retail component to sell art, create art gallery space, provide an artist in residence space and be a venue and marketplace for performance art as well.
- // All forms of cultural expression create a large number of “back of house” businesses and career opportunities – sound and lighting technicians, art restoration and preservation, script editing, venue management, accounting, supportive online technologies and graphic arts, to name a few. Black, and in particular Black women's, opportunities have been historically few and far between in this field and will be a focus of the Center.
- // Given the need for food amenities (e.g. banquets, ongoing events), we expect 4-5 catering businesses to be partially housed within the Center.

ATTRACTION AND RETENTION OF TALENT

- // One of the most important goals of the Center is to create a space that helps businesses and organizations attract and retain Black talent. The Center's driving purpose is to create a cultural and community space that allows for the Black community to find a cultural home. This lack of a third space for the Black communities within the region is a major reason, based on the wide listening we have done, why Black people leave our community for other cities and regions that have these kinds of spaces in abundance (e.g. Atlanta).
- // One key program within the Center will be to reach out to employers with Black employees to create a remote work space that these employees can work out of while also finding the space more culturally attuned.
- // If we want Black entrepreneurs to thrive in our community, it takes more than incubators, capital and business support. It takes creating a culturally specific business community where Black entrepreneurs want to live and grow their businesses. This is one of the main intended impacts of the Center.