



STRATEGIC DIRECTION RETREAT
SUMMARY REPORT

FEBRUARY, 2019

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AGREEMENTS

- Be here; silence phones and be present
- Use 'I' statements
- Listen deeply; one microphone
- None of us know everything; together we know a lot
- Take space, give space
- Self care; eat, stand, stretch
- Decolonize your mind; be brave
- 'Both and' / 'Yes and' as opposed to 'No but'
- Intent versus impact

RETREAT GOALS

- Build trust, camaraderie, and understanding among WMBK men
- Improve outcomes by co-designing with WMBK members and community
- Refine mission, vision, and values with community in order to guide the group and unify the message and work
- Identify and align key strategies for next 12-18 months
- Uplift the value of collective wisdom and work
- Honor voices of those in the room

VALUES

- Embrace all men of color
- Perseverance; there will be bumps, but we will make it
- Control our narrative - speak the truth
- Value our history
- Learning happens everywhere
- Intergenerational leadership
- Shift mindsets
- Community is family
- Decolonize our minds

- Sacred space
- Brotherhood
- Collective work; intergenerational
- Celebrate
- Positive stewards of the planet
- Empathy
- Diversity of thought
- Understanding
- Proactive
- Unapologetically Black
- Grit
- No shame
- Consistency
- Celebrate and normalize Black Excellence

ACTIVITIES

(What's going on? Why? How? What's involved?)

- A place to have talks; hard conversations to ensure youth don't forget our history (slavery, holocaust, etc.)
- Mentorship programs that provide life skill programs and tutoring
- Not being perceived as 'up to no good' (for wearing a hoodie)
- More after school programs
- Mentorship and tutoring
- Strong schools
- Support for economic growth on the East side of the County
- Initiatives with clear intent and benefit for the community
- Having multiple recreation centers across Ypsilanti
- Contact more wordz
- More school programs
- Black fire chief
- Big basketball games where people from different backgrounds and neighborhoods can become closer
- Farming and gardening initiatives
- Young Black boys playing freely - with no hoodies on
- Properly functional street lights on side streets

INTERACTIONS

(Who is involved? How do they engage with each other? The environment? How did they get here? What are they doing?)

- Listening and not getting mad
- More funding for educational purposes
- Youth input; no bullying
- Fun, engaging, relaxing, intellectual, social interactions
- Supportive role models have a presence in community events
 - First day of school
 - Sporting events
 - Graduations
- Black communities will support their fellow brothers and sisters
- Racial unity
 - Deeper understanding of Blackness
 - Acknowledge the damage of race in our society
- Fostering a welcoming environment applicable for engaging youth in their community
- Interactions with those who need help and guidance being led by those who are successful
- Weaving of educational, business, government, and service entities
- National discussion
- How we greet and communicate with each other in real ways
- Political parties that address our needs
- MBK is the goal standard of community interaction with young men of color
- Rites of passage programs
- Financial literacy and gifting of money stocks, trust funds, business, etc.
- Businesses interact with and support the community
- By 2025, men of color will be more successful and doing way better
- Other community leaders
- Paid workers to support youth
- Outreach by professionals for access to programming
- Paid youth workers
- Deeper conversations on race
- Community needs communication
- People look out for each other more

- Boys are graduating from high school
- Boys are thriving in the arts and sciences
- Less incarceration for our boys of color
- Pathways of predecessors and role models as strong influences in the our community

USERS

(Who is there? What are their roles and relationships?)

- More races involved
- Respect - 'I with We' mindset
 - Women
 - Neighbors and neighborhoods
- Educational service agencies exist to address issues
 - School-to-prison pipeline
 - Black/Brown education achievement gap
 - STEM
 - Outcomes and well evaluated initiatives
- More mentors around the hood to give young men hope
- Boys, youth, teens, young adults, seasoned individuals, seniors, fathers
- Educators are of color
- Employ neighborhood leaders
- Programming for youth development in elementary school
- The whole community; young folks learning and helping the elders, the elders teaching and protecting the young folks
- By 2025, we will all understand each other and we can find ways to interact with each other and make change
- Educational entities providing programming for kids
- Business and government feet held to fire to save lives
- More youth have access to sciences and expand knowledge to use the prior science by Egyptians in the use of free power plants
- Recognized leaders of the community of color are 35-40 years old

OBJECTS

(What are the objects/devices people have in their environment and how much do they relate to their activities?)

- The Church
- Phones
- Spirituality
- Book spaces for open discussion
- Housing
- Free power
- Food
- Access to educational teen tools, books, and school supplies for low income families/individuals with low access to these resources
- Mom and Pop bookstores
- African American literature
- Updated AComa Portal; Black business and professional directory
- Food
- Learning skills
- Statues, monuments, and symbolic figures that acknowledge our success and accomplishments
- Community centers
- More than adequate school system
- Jobs
- Parks
- Educational support services
- Libraries
- Mentoring programs in recreation centers

ENVIRONMENT

(Where are things happening? What is the setting? What's the atmosphere like?)

- Population at post-secondary educational institutions has increased to 65% of enrolled students
- Youth input
 - Bungee jumping
 - Parades

- Sports
- More friends
- Math/science involvement; experiments
- Clean, less carbon emissions
- More male Black faces as teachers
- Entrepreneur buildings that are Black men owned
- More food for people
- Everyone in the community is connected; Latinos, Blacks, Whites, Asians, Indians, Natives, etc. (no wall)
- More recreational buildings
- Tutoring
- More income programs for the Black community
- By 2025, more strong Black owned businesses
- Black youth taking advantage of HBCUs more often
- Black kids will have access to youth employment programs, learning trades, and affordable higher education
- Void of blight
- We get higher education
- Everyone is comfortable together; tight-knit friendships
- By 2025, there will be more people here
- Black mayor of Ypsilanti
- Everyone treated equally regardless of race
- Fun, activities, joy
- Safe; filled with lots of smiles
- Built on trust and camaraderie
- Quicker and more reliable police response
- Same resources in all schools around the county
- Southside professional development center
- Community of learning and social action (WCC, EMU, YCS, AAPS, UM)
- P-20 support for every child
- 3000 intergenerational members
- Monthly breakfast
- Clean and peaceful environment where more people have each other's back to help improve their lives
- Our Churches are a center point for youth activities

VISION

(To pursue our vision in the next 12-18 months, we will:)

- Develop entrepreneurial building partnerships; promote and market WMBK as viable voice #50Strong
- Hold entities accountable at City Council meetings
- Host workshops for financial literacy and wealth development
- Build community by developing trained and committed ambassadors among youth
- Use social media and other tools to change the narrative
- Raise financial and community support for WMBK
- Consistently attend WMBK planning sessions and events
- Secure scholarship funds for high school students
- Develop a mentorship program internally
- Collaborate with business, community, and municipal entities to build connections
- Construct “rites of passage” as a tradition
- Define roles and responsibilities; develop internal infrastructure
- Increase intentional youth activities