

MetroMorphosis®
Transforming Urban Communities from Within

20
24

IMPACT REPORT



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WHO WE ARE

➔ Mission

Our mission is to transform urban communities from within. Through this mission, we mobilize people to design and implement sustainable solutions to persistent challenges.

➔ Vision

We envision a world where a critical mass of informed and engaged people are equipped to shift community systems to focus on equity, allowing for infinite amounts of sustainable change.

➔ Values



Excellence – The difference between good and great is in the details. Communities thrive when **specific attention** is given to the details that matter to its members to help create communities that are **second to none**.



Learning – We are always reflecting and examining. Communities thrive when the **wisdom of the past** is guided by the context of the present to create a **better future**.



Chemistry – We are more impactful when we value one another. Communities thrive when **everyone** is valued and can **contribute** to its success.



Self-Care – This work requires us to maintain our well-being. Communities thrive when **all of its members** are **healthy, happy** and **safe**.

A WORD FROM THE CO-LEADS

This year's impact report is a reflection of our deep commitment to transforming urban communities from within. Every achievement you'll read about is rooted in our core belief that authentic, sustainable change begins with empowered citizens, equitable systems, and collaborative leadership. As we move forward, we remain steadfast in our mission—to listen, learn, and act alongside our community, creating spaces where everyone's contributions matter and every person is equipped to thrive. Thank you for believing in this movement and for joining us in building a stronger Baton Rouge for all.



***Authentic, sustainable change
begins with empowered citizens.***

Two handwritten signatures in blue ink. The signature on the left is for Sherreta R. Harrison and the signature on the right is for Raymond A. Jetson.

Sherreta R. Harrison, Chief Executive Catalyst & Co-Lead
Raymond A. Jetson, Wisdom & Longevity Catalyst & Co-Lead

TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER: METROMORPHOSIS' 5-YEAR STRATEGIC VISION 2024-2028

MetroMorphosis' five-year strategic plan (2024–2028) reflects our commitment to transforming urban communities through the MetroMorphosis Method—a proven, inclusive, and sustainable model for change. Over the next five years, we will focus on scaling this approach to three cities, centering our efforts on:



Mobilizing citizens in service to thriving communities



Fostering catalytic partnerships among diverse stakeholders



Clear and impactful communication of the organization's approach and its measurable impact



Sustaining the work through annual development strategies and responsible stewardship.

Our work will prioritize codifying successful solutions into replicable best practices, expanding our methods through training partner organizations, and influencing narratives to highlight the resilience and potential of inner-city communities. Through intentional campaigns and initiatives, we aim to shift perceptions and elevate stories that honor the strength of these neighborhoods. By integrating strategic learning, continuous development, and collaborative leadership, we will create infrastructure for systemic change while equipping citizens with tools to lead their own transformation.

This strategic plan exemplifies our unwavering dedication to redefining urban renewal and empowering communities from within.

HOW WE'RE MEASURING OUR SUCCESS

To measure the progress and effectiveness of our strategic plan, we track both long-term and yearly metrics that reflect our commitment to equitable systems change and community transformation.

LONG-TERM METRICS:

- Redefined systems with a focus on equity
- Activated assets and mobilized citizens equipped to participate in those systems
- Fundamental shifts in the way we think and talk about inner city communities

SHORT-TERM METRICS:



of mobilized citizens &
depth of mobilization



\$ directed to community assets
& the impact of the assets



↑ in capacity of partners
and stakeholders



Δ in attitude, beliefs, behaviors,
norms, and practices

In 2024, we made significant strides in transforming urban communities. Notable achievements include:

- Mobilized **614** community members
- Distributed **\$125,000** to small businesses, enabling **80%** of recipients to expand their operations
- Made over **\$23,000** in Catalytic Investments
- Delivered **200** hours of personalized business coaching
- Supported small businesses in creating **24** new jobs and winning **15** new contracts
- Empowered **92%** of ULDI participants to feel better equipped to lead
- Influenced **1** organization to adopt the Intergenerational Co-Leadership Model

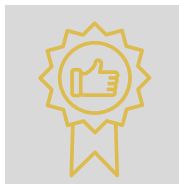
THE METROMORPHOSIS METHOD

For over 12 years, MetroMorphosis has been dedicated to transforming urban communities from within, fostering sustainable solutions to persistent challenges. With this vast experience, we operationalized our approach into what is now known as the MetroMorphosis Method—a model designed to equip communities with a critical mass of residents who possess the skills and commitment needed to shift the systemic conditions that hinder progress. Over the past two years, we have deepened our application of this method by mobilizing thousands of residents, cultivating catalytic partnerships, and advancing initiatives like OneRouge and My Brother's Keeper Baton Rouge to address systemic inequities. These efforts have not only strengthened community leadership but also laid the groundwork for replicable solutions that can be scaled across other cities. The MetroMorphosis Method is built on five core tactics. These tactics guide our work as we move forward, equipping communities to lead their own transformation efforts. The following pages will explore how these strategies have been implemented and their impact on advancing equity and systemic change.



WE ENGAGE AND CONVENE STAKEHOLDERS

from the community to increase awareness around the disparity, to determine the root causes of the issues causing the disparity and to reimagine the community without the disparity. This often looks like a listening session, a data walk, or a facilitated conversation.



WE IDENTIFY AND ADVOCATE FOR BEST PRACTICES

to eliminate the disparity, address the root causes of the issue or bring about the reimagined community.



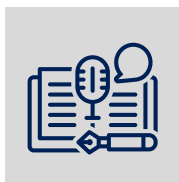
WE DEVELOP EQUITABLE PROCESSES

by facilitating conversations and activities to build a customized solution in a way that fairly leverages the resources already present in the community and ushers in new resources.



WE REINFORCE CITIZENS' POWER AND EQUIP THEM WITH SKILLS AND TOOLS

to lead the change they wish to see. This allows for greater authenticity and sustainability and allows for expanded capacity because the solutions aren't dependent solely on one organization.



WE INFLUENCE AND SUPPORT NEW NARRATIVES AROUND INNER CITY COMMUNITIES

from one of need and deficit to one of strength and possibility. The narrative shift builds public will for the interventions and, ultimately, a new, thriving community.



WE ENGAGE AND CONVENE STAKEHOLDERS

Listening, Learning, and Working Together

Through dynamic gatherings like the C3 Summit, LaunchBR Vendor Connect, Uptown and collecting data at local community events, we bring together Baton Rouge's visionaries, change makers, and community members - creating spaces for collaboration, learning, and partnership that drive our city's shared progress and unlock new opportunities for all.

C3 2024 - Connecting Cohorts, Catalyzing Change

Since 2022, the C3 Summit has been a **catalyst for change** in Baton Rouge, bringing together key groups of visionaries and change makers. In 2024, we convened **over 100** alumni of the various esteemed leadership programs throughout Baton Rouge to, **amplify** their leadership toolbox with resources, practical skills and insights, **grow** their professional network across various leadership cohorts, give them an opportunity to contribute to a **shared vision** for the future of Baton Rouge, and ultimately help retain and leverage the incredible talent we have right here in our great city. A key outcome of this convening was the **Leadership Agenda**, a co-created report encompassing the desires and needs of our local change agents.

LaunchBR Vendor Connects

Held twice per year, LaunchBR Vendor Connect is small business owners' opportunity to make **meaningful connections** with local procurers and discover potential matches that meet supplier needs, while expanding and diversifying the providers of those needs.

42
MATCHES

Small business owners are paired with a larger entity for 15 minutes to discuss their procurement priorities and upcoming contractual opportunities. Since 2022, the Vendor Connect convening has yielded **42 matches**.





WE ENGAGE AND CONVENE STAKEHOLDERS

Listening, Learning, and Working Together

Revitalizing Uptown (formerly South Baton Rouge)

In 2023, MetroMorphosis and Kimble Properties began collaborating with South Baton Rouge residents and stakeholders through stakeholder convenings, community conversations, and neighborhood canvassing. The goal? **Rejuvenate South Baton Rouge through a community-centric, collective approach, focusing on physical development, place-making, and economic revitalization.** It is our wildest hope that a social, economic and cultural rebirth unfolds in the district, and that this renaissance serves as a model for what's possible for other communities in Baton Rouge and across the South. In late 2024, the group decided to re-name this historic district **Uptown**, a more fitting moniker that captures the heart and history of this neighborhood.

In 2024, the group engaged in four community stakeholder convenings, experienced a **60% increase** in resident engagement fueled by knocking on over 100 doors. Additionally, the group secured a temporary site for the **Uptown Community Resource Hub**, a center to connect residents to essential services and address critical neighborhood needs by integrating food security, skills training, and service accessibility.

60%
community
engagement

Collecting Data that Tells a Story

Data collection is a cornerstone of identifying community needs, monitoring progress, and evaluating impact. In 2024, MetroMorphosis began collecting feedback from events and community surveys, learning about residents' experiences and highlighting disparities and opportunities for action. Last year MetroMorphosis engaged more than **400 residents** of all ages at **17 events**. At these gatherings, community members were invited to share their experiences of neighborhood life on topics such as:



Access to Essential Resources



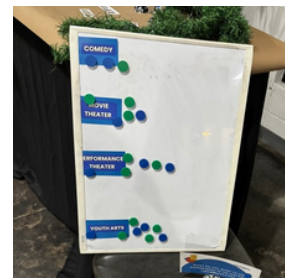
Health



Neighborhood Safety



Financial security





WE IDENTIFY AND ADVOCATE FOR BEST PRACTICES

Championing Proven Techniques for Community Transformation

We are committed to implementing best practices that drive meaningful, sustainable change. This year, our efforts have focused on furthering intergenerational co-leadership, launching innovative revenue streams and strengthening procurement processes to better prepare small business suppliers for success. By sharing these approaches, we aim to inspire others and contribute to a broader movement of organizations adopting proven strategies that foster equity, resilience, and long-term impact.

A New Model of Leadership

In September 2020, MetroMorphosis Founder Raymond A. Jetson and longtime executive Sherreta Harrison began co-leading the organization, officially founding an intergenerational co-leadership model that pairs Raymond's experience as a Baby Boomer with Sherreta's Millennial perspective. This best practice around intentional partnership bridges complementary strengths to guide the organization's mission, while modeling a sustainable approach to leadership succession and organizational growth. This innovative model has inspired both local (The Walls Project) and national (Co-Generate) organizations to explore the benefits of intergenerational co-leadership.



Diversifying Revenue Through Movement Merch



In late 2024, MetroMorphosis launched the Movement Merch Store to create a sustainable revenue stream that directly supports its mission. Every purchase from Movement Merch tells a story of resilience, transformation, and community empowerment, turning apparel into an investment in local change. Proceeds fuel initiatives that inspire citizen action, connect small businesses to capital, cultivate leadership, and revitalize neighborhoods like South Baton Rouge and Scotlandville. Through this innovative approach, community members not only wear their support but actively contribute to building stronger, more equitable Baton Rouge neighborhoods.



WE IDENTIFY AND ADVOCATE FOR BEST PRACTICES

Championing Proven Techniques for Community Transformation

Strengthening the Procurement System

By applying the mobilization continuum tool to the procurement process, the LaunchBR team, in partnership with the **Baton Rouge Procurement Opportunity Partnership (BRPOP)**, identified a best practice among large-scale buyers on the BRPOP Council: proactively onboarding small business suppliers **before** contract opportunities arise. This approach guides suppliers through essential vetting and preparation steps in advance, ensuring they are **ready** and **competitive** when opportunities become available—rather than being disadvantaged by tight procurement timelines. Through collaborative discussions with procurement professionals, this method was not only recognized but also validated by peers as a shared value, exemplifying how **collective action** and **shared learning** can drive more equitable and effective supplier diversity in Baton Rouge's procurement ecosystem.



WE DEVELOP EQUITABLE PROCESSES

Co-creating Fair and Community-Centered Solutions

At MetroMorphosis, developing equitable processes is central to our mission of transforming urban communities from within. By expanding access to capital for small businesses and establishing initiatives like the Uptown Community Fund to meet urgent local needs, we work to ensure that resources and opportunities are distributed fairly and effectively. These efforts not only address immediate challenges but also lay the groundwork for long-term community resilience and shared prosperity.

Expanding Small Business Access to Capital

LaunchBR is dedicated to empowering local entrepreneurs, particularly Black and women-owned businesses, by providing essential resources and financial support. Understanding the challenges posed by limited access to capital, the **Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)**, facilitated by MetroMorphosis in partnership with Essential Federal Credit Union, is designed to bridge these gaps.

\$125k
awarded

This fund offers up to \$10,000 in capital to help businesses expand their capacity, recover from disaster impacts, or pivot their services to adapt to new challenges. In 2024, **9** small businesses were awarded RLF loans totaling **\$125,000**.

"The loan we received enabled us to overcome the challenges of securing upfront capital to take on new projects. It allowed us to acquire 5 new state contracts and onboard 16 new employees. The support we received was invaluable in helping us grow and meet upfront costs."

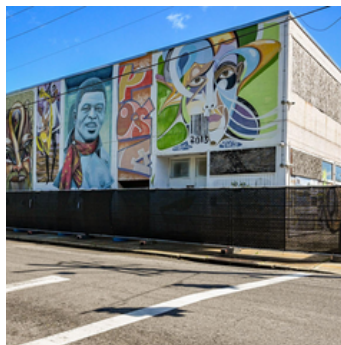
*LAMEKIA WASHINGTON, OWNER, DIAMOND SECURITY SERVICES LLC
LAUNCHBR PARTICIPANT*

"ULDI's tailored approach and deep local knowledge were game-changers for me. The expert facilitators, alumni network, and focus on our city's complexities provided a powerful platform for learning and challenging ideas. This experience has left me feeling more connected and capable of impacting Baton Rouge."

URBAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE PARTICIPANT

"I learned how to swim in this neighborhood. Brooks Pool. I got my first haircut at Fourway. The community brings their family out and supports my events. When you do right by this community, they always support. It's always a pleasure to come back and see the growth and development happening here."

*CHARLES DANIEL – OWNER, GEAUX RIDE
UPTOWN COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER*





WE REINFORCE CITIZENS' POWER AND EQUIP THEM WITH SKILLS AND TOOLS

Empowering Changemakers to lead and sustain transformation

Lasting change begins with empowered citizens who have the skills and tools to shape their own communities. This year, we celebrated the 10th cohort of the Urban Leadership Development Initiative, hosted dynamic Leadership Labs at the C3 Summit to foster learning and collaboration, and provided targeted support to business owners seeking certifications that enhance their competitiveness for contracts.

A Decade of Developing Change Makers

The Urban Leadership Development Initiative (ULDI), launched in 2014 by MetroMorphosis, has spent the past decade equipping over **100** change agents in Baton Rouge with adaptive leadership skills specifically tailored to address challenges in urban communities. Unlike traditional leadership programs, ULDI focuses on developing individuals who drive systemic change, emphasizing **community engagement, coalition building, and innovative problem-solving**. Over the last 10 years, ULDI alumni have become influential in diverse sectors-ranging from public transit to the arts-actively shaping stronger, more resilient neighborhoods. The program's impact is seen in a growing network of change makers who are not only trained to identify and address persistent local issues but are also committed to making a lasting difference in Baton Rouge and beyond.

C3 Summit Leadership Labs

The **2024 C3 Summit** showcased MetroMorphosis' commitment to empowering citizens by delivering a series of dynamic **Leadership Labs**, each facilitated by alumni from Baton Rouge's leading leadership programs. These sessions tackled essential topics such as **project coaching, self-awareness, creative movement design, thriving in leadership, learning from the past, and centering lived experiences in community change**. By equipping participants with practical skills and reinforcing their capacity to **drive** impact, we're further developing a new generation of adaptive, community-focused change makers.





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Empowering Changemakers to lead and sustain transformation

Catalyzing Growth through Certification and Contract Readiness

MetroMorphosis, as the Small Business Outreach Lead for the East Baton Rouge City-Parish **MOVEBR program**, equips local small businesses to become contract-ready by offering technical assistance and guiding them through the SEDBE certification process. Although certification does not guarantee contracts, it is essential for increasing visibility and competitiveness in public infrastructure projects. Businesses like LC Transport, BMB Trucking LLC, and Choice Vine Consulting LLC have used this process to pursue MOVEBR and other opportunities. We also help businesses obtain additional certifications—including the Hudson Initiative, SEBD, SBA 8(a), and DBE—broadening their access to procurement, federal contracts, and long-term growth resources. In 2024, we supported over **a dozen businesses** in starting the certification process, with **seven** successfully certified.



EXPANDING ACCESS TO:



Procurement
Opportunities



Federal
Contracts



Long-term
Resources



WE INFLUENCE AND SUPPORT NEW NARRATIVES AROUND INNER CITY COMMUNITIES

From Deficit to Strength, Building a New Community Story

We are committed to shaping new, empowering narratives about inner city communities. We highlight stories of resilience, pride, and collective generosity. By uplifting these narratives, we challenge outdated perceptions and showcase the vibrant history, culture, and contributions that define our neighborhoods.

Juneteenth - Sweet Freedom

The power to create meaningful change has always lied within our communities. Juneteenth 2024, we launched a campaign, **Sweet Freedom**, to celebrate the legacy of neighborhoods like Scotlandville and South Baton Rouge, emphasizing their roots in early Freedmen's Towns. By highlighting the history and significance of Juneteenth, we demystified long-standing narratives around lack and failure, and encouraged reflection, unity, and active participation in building a future where every community thrives.



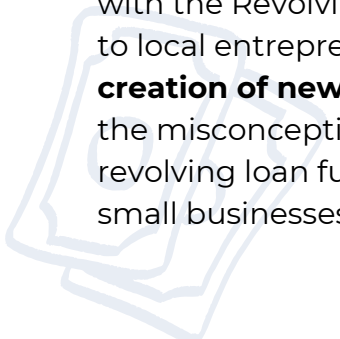
Giving Time, Treasure & Talent

Each August, MetroMorphosis joins the global celebration of Black Philanthropy Month to honor the many ways Black communities give and uplift one another—dispelling the myth that philanthropy is reserved for the wealthy. Black households donate an estimated \$11 billion annually, outpacing other groups despite holding less wealth on average. Through this campaign, MetroMorphosis raises funds to support and invest in Baton Rouge's urban communities through small grants and catalytic investments.



Small Dollars; Big Impact

Micro-lending to small businesses doesn't have to be risky—in fact, our experience with the Revolving Loan Fund proves the opposite. By offering \$10,000 micro-loans to local entrepreneurs, we've witnessed significant positive outcomes, including the **creation of new jobs and the awarding of key contracts**. These results challenge the misconception that small loans lack impact or carry excessive risk. Instead, our revolving loan fund demonstrates that targeted, modest investments can empower small businesses to grow, thrive, and contribute meaningfully to the local economy.



Looking Ahead

As we close the first chapter of our five-year strategic plan, we are energized by the progress made in 2024 and remain steadfast in our mission to transform urban communities from within. The journey ahead will see us scale the **MetroMorphosis Method** to new cities, codify and share best practices, and deepen our investment in mobilizing citizens, building catalytic partnerships, and equipping leaders at every level. With intentional **learning** and **collaboration**, together we will challenge outdated systems, shift narratives, and create new pathways for equitable prosperity.

Thank you for standing with us as we move boldly into the future—committed to innovation, stewardship, and the shared vision of vibrant, thriving neighborhoods for all.



THANK YOU

MetroMorphosis®
Transforming Urban Communities from Within



4163 North Boulevard,
Baton Rouge, LA 70806



info@metromorphosis.net