



BlackEconomics.org®

“Oh How We Need Thee!”

Fall is upon us. The school year is well underway. Planning is in train for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and New Years Holidays. Those engaged in academic pursuits already have their sights set on the second semester and graduation in April, May, or June 2025. Fortunately, planning is a prerequisite for successful lives.

Unfortunately, Black Americans—until recently—were missing an important aspect of planning. Yes, we have long-standing religious, “legacy,” fraternal, scholarly, labor, business, cultural, communal, and other organizations. However, these organizations are largely stovepipes that do not readily and easily integrate. When cross-fertilization has occurred, it has been mainly to achieve one-time goals or objectives. This fragmented approach to managing and planning Black America’s future has been disastrous! We are odd/unique because other racial and ethnic groups have planning apparatuses that are designed to optimize their outcomes broadly.

Yes, from one perspective, Black America has made “great progress.” We can all remind ourselves that the incomes and “buying power” of Black Americans ranks us highly among the world’s nations.ⁱ But this “progress” has mainly come as a veneer—a favorable appearance. In real and relative terms, over and over again, and in report after report, whether from our many organizations

or from US governments at all levels, the evidence is that not much measurable relative progress has occurred. We remain where? Perpetually at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder relative to other racial and ethnic groups in the US.

But for our African minds, problems, adverse conditions, and unwanted outcomes provide a delicious mental meal. We joyously digest these troublesome concerns the way we digest our favorite meals prepared by Grandma for Thanksgiving. We use African mental science to explore, analyze, decipher, and solve these concerns. Then we begin to verbally elaborate, even pontificate, concerning the solutions we identify. We discuss these solutions in barber shops and beauty parlors, in nail salons, over Sunday meals, during half-times of football games, in classrooms, and during family gatherings for winter and/or summer holidays. Fortunately, the wise remind us that: “Talk is cheap. It takes money to buy land.”

And so, if we want to capture the “land,” then we must begin to act systematically, methodically, and judiciously to implement solutions to troublesome concerns that our African Minds identify.

We pause here to refer you to a June 2021 BlackEconomics.org Commentary: “What Do You Know About the NBPC?”ⁱⁱ This is a 507-word document that describes in

moderate detail our vision for a “National Black Planning Council” (NBPC) that would correct, once and for all, Black America’s unintegrated and uncoordinated approaches for tackling our troublesome concerns. Most importantly, the NBPC is expected to be the head that keeps the heart, body, and appendages moving to ensure steady and sustained progress that will lift Black Americans from the bowels to the brains of the American or any society. We all know that we have the power and tools to do this. Yet, to date, we have failed to take correct action.

We pause again to mention that, following June 2021, BlackEconomics.org contributors served with a small, but geographically widespread, grassroots group of Black American activists—the Long-Term Strategic Plan (LTSP) Panel. The LTSP Panel worked over 19-months during 2022 and 2023 to develop a starting point *Long-Term Strategic Plan for Black America (LTSPFBA)*, which features an NBPC at its operational center.ⁱⁱⁱ The LTSP Panel and its small, but burgeoning, cadre of “Responsible Parties” will soon confront decisions about developing its prescribed NBPC by forming consortia of the **leadership** of key Black American scholarly and professional

associations across relevant disciplines/fields of study. While the leadership of certain Black religious, fraternal, and self-improvement organizations have consortia now or had them in the past, Black scholarly and professional associations/organizations are largely disconnected.

BlackEconomics.org will urge the LTSP Panel and its “Responsible Parties” to move expeditiously to help form the aforementioned consortia of Black American leaders of scholarly and professional associations/organizations. These consortia, along with the already mentioned religious and fraternal organization consortia, can fill seats in the NBPC and can help accelerate Black America’s forward movement in the most integrated and coordinated manner ever.

We can listen to our inner consciousness and contemplate the words “ Oh how we need thee” from religious and philosophical perspectives. But in our real, material, and current world where we have an interest in transforming our outcomes favorably—and deservedly so—we must see with clear vision that implementing the *LTSPFBA* with the NBPC at its head is what we need right now! Oh how we need an NBPC right now!

Now that we all know, let us adopt any means necessary to prepare and get on with the show.

B Robinson
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ⁱ We acknowledge that the idea/concept of Black America’s buying/purchasing power may be controversial.

ⁱⁱ Brooks Robinson (2021). “What Do You Know About the NBPC?” BlackEconomics.org. Honolulu. <https://www.blackeconomics.org/BEFuture/nbpc.pdf> (Ret. 091924).

ⁱⁱⁱ Long-Term Strategic Plan Panel (2023). *Long-Term Strategic Plan for Black America*. Honolulu. https://www.ltspfba.org/LTSP/fin_ltspfba_071223.pdf (Ret. 091924). See the “General Public Service” chapter of this volume for details on the NBPC and the operational structure proposed for guiding *LTSPFBA* implementation.