



History of the Black Cultural Zone



In **2013 – 2014**, the City of Oakland and the Oakland Sustainable Neighborhoods Initiative (OSNI) Collaborative led by community partners like Allen Temple Baptist Church, CJJC, East Bay Asian Youth Center, EastSide Arts Alliance (ESAA), TransForm, and current leaders of Just Cities (formerly Dellums Institute for Social Justice/Just Cities), organized over 50 community and faith-based organizations, public agencies, national CDFIs, foundations, and banks to harness our collective power for the Corridor's revitalization. A major priority that came out of this Collaborative was the development of a Black Culture Zone (BCZ) in recognition of the disparate impact that decades of disinvestment in legacy Black communities like East Oakland and what the growing displacement trend portended for the Black community.

From **2014 – 2017**, the vision for the Black Culture Zone grew organically from a reflection on historical power movements and the on the ground knowledge gleaned from decades of collective community service. The East Oakland Black Cultural Zone Collaborative (Collaborative), led by EastSide Arts Alliance (ESAA) and represented by Elena Serrano and Greg Morozumi, was formed.

In **2017**, ESAA, joined by the Dellum Institute for Social Justice/Just Cities, represented by Margaretta Lin, John Jones III and Ndidi Okwelogu, led the preparation of a draft Business Plan for a Black Cultural Zone Hub. In addition, the East Oakland Neighborhoods Initiative (EONI) was created to partner on the Transformative Climate Communities (TCC) Planning Grant with East Oakland Building Healthy Communities, Hope Collaborative and OCAC as the three lead co-applicants, joined by the City of Oakland and 13 community based organizations, including East Oakland Collective, represented by Candice Elder, Marquita "Keta" Price and Prescott Reavis. The final EONI Community Plan released in **October 2019**, driven by the community's concerns and priorities, identified the establishment of a Black Cultural Zone with incubator spaces for emerging entrepreneurs, the transformation of vacant buildings into community assets and the establishment of a community development corporation as three of several top tier strategies to achieve these goals. These, and other, EONI Community Plan strategies are cornerstones of our Purpose and Goals for the Black Cultural Zone CDC.

In **2018**, the Collaborative focused on implementing arts and cultural strategies, engaging artists and community members in art activism. Allen Temple Health and Social Services, represented by Gloria Crowell, joined the Collaborative.

In **November 2019**, the Collaborative incorporated the Black Cultural Zone Community Development Corporation as a California Nonprofit and expanded the Collaborative Partners.

Today, the East Oakland Black Cultural Zone Collaborative continues its work to develop the East Oakland Black Cultural Zone.