

aging while **Black**®

Denver

BLACK AGING SUMMIT

Post Report



2026

**BUILDING THE VILLAGE TOGETHER
IN MONTBELLO**



The **Denver Black Aging Summit** held on Wednesday, June 24, 2026, was intentionally designed to advance the work already underway in Montbello with a number of community members and partners. The Summit invited a broader cross-section of residents, Black elders, organizations, and stakeholders to strengthen, refine, and expand three emerging initiatives: Peer Navigators, Technology Ministries, and Third Space.

Each initiative reflects a different but connected dimension of what it takes for Black elders to thrive in community.

1. **Peer Navigators** are intended to provide trusted, relationship-based support that helps elders connect to resources, services, and opportunities with greater clarity and confidence.
2. **Technology Ministries** is designed to help Black elders build digital confidence and practical technology skills in trusted, community-based settings.
3. **Third Space** focuses on creating and coordinating welcoming places where Black elders can gather, build relationships, experience belonging, and remain connected to community life.

Through the Summit, participants validated these priorities, clarified what would make each successful, identified community assets that can support implementation, and surfaced practical guidance for the working groups as they move into the next phase of development.



PEER NAVIGATOR

What participants contributed

Participants consistently described peer navigation as a relationship-centered strategy rather than an information service. Trust, visibility, and follow-through emerged as the defining characteristics of an effective navigator.

Participants emphasized that Peer Navigators should:

- Build relationships before providing referrals.
- Walk alongside elders rather than simply directing them to services.
- Follow up after referrals to ensure needs are met.
- Proactively share information instead of waiting for elders to ask.
- Be visible and accessible within the community.
- Develop strong knowledge of available community resources and services.

Participants also identified several barriers that continue to complicate the journey for Black elders, including transportation, limited awareness of available resources, and inconsistent coordination among organizations.

What this means for advancing the work

The discussion suggests that the Peer Navigator effort should focus less on creating another navigation program and more on strengthening trusted pathways through the existing ecosystem of support.

Participants consistently envisioned navigators as connectors who help Black elders move confidently through community resources by building trust, reducing confusion, and providing ongoing accompaniment.

The effectiveness of the model will depend as much on relationships and coordination as on knowledge of available services. A position description for the Denver Peer Navigator has already been developed, including core responsibilities, training expectations, and stipend structure.

Community assets and potential partners identified

Participants identified numerous organizations and trusted institutions that could strengthen a Peer Navigator initiative.

Community organizations/partners

- AURORA COMMUNITY COLLEGE NAVIGATOR PROGRAM
- DENVER RESCUE MISSION
- MENTAL HEALTH CLINICS
- SILVER TECH VIA COLORADO FUTURE TECH
- GOLDEN AGE CLUB
- BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
- FOOD BANKS
- PASTORS AND FAITH COMMUNITIES
- CITY HALL
- 211

These organizations represent an initial network of potential referral partners, training resources, and trusted community access points.

Guidance for the working group

The next phase of work should focus on implementation rather than redefining the model. Recommended next steps include:

- Recruit and confirm an initial cohort of Peer Navigators using the existing role description and stipend structure.
- Provide onboarding and training focused on listening, follow-up, resource knowledge, documentation, and warm handoffs.
- Map trusted referral partners and existing navigation resources into a usable referral pathway for navigators.
- Develop a simple process for tracking outreach, referrals, and follow-up.
- Launch a small pilot to test how navigators build trust, connect elders to support, and coordinate with partner organizations.



TECHNOLOGY MINISTRIES

What participants contributed

Participants described technology as an increasingly essential part of daily life, while acknowledging that many Black elders continue to experience barriers related to confidence, access, and rapidly changing technology.

They emphasized that successful technology support should:

- Occur in smaller, hands-on learning environments.
- Demonstrate practical, everyday benefits of technology.
- Include instruction on phones, tablets, AI, and device integration.
- Incorporate intergenerational learning opportunities.
- Provide ongoing support rather than one-time training.

Participants also noted that fear, uncertainty, and limited understanding of available technology resources remain significant barriers.

What this means for advancing the work

The conversation reinforced that Technology Ministries should focus on building confidence and practical capability rather than simply teaching technology skills. Participants envisioned technology support as an ongoing community resource that strengthens connection, independence, and access while helping Black elders navigate an increasingly digital world.

A trusted faith partner has already been identified in True Light Baptist Church, creating a clear opportunity to move from concept development into pilot planning and launch.

Community assets and potential partners identified

Participants identified several resources that could strengthen this work.

Community partners

- Montbello 2020
- Senior Planet
- Intergenerational volunteers

Community resources

- Community-based learning spaces
- Faith communities
- Existing senior technology resources

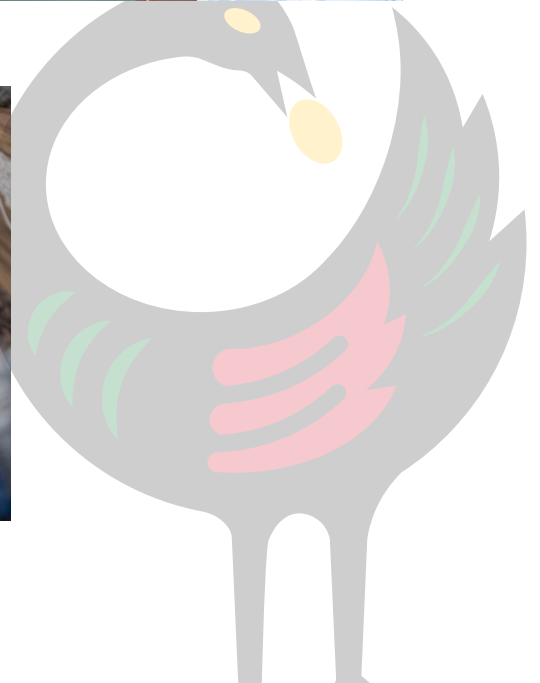
TECHNOLOGY MINISTRIES

*These assets provide opportunities to **expand access** through partnerships rather than developing entirely new infrastructure.*

Guidance for the working group

The next phase should focus on activating the partnership and preparing for launch. Recommended next steps include:

- Formalize True Light Baptist Church as the launch-site partner for Technology Ministries.
- Convene a planning meeting with church leadership and the Technology Ministries work group to co-design the first pilot series (i.e. format, session size, priority topics, frequency, volunteer roles, and participant outreach strategy).
- Identify instructional and coaching support, including possible partners and intergenerational volunteers.



THIRD SPACE

What participants contributed

Participants consistently described Third Space as an opportunity to strengthen community connection, belonging, and participation. Rather than creating new facilities, participants identified numerous existing places that could become welcoming gathering spaces for Black elders.

They also emphasized the importance of dedicated leadership, sustainable funding, communication, and transportation in ensuring that these spaces remain active and accessible.

What this means for advancing the work

Participants viewed Third Space as an opportunity to better connect existing community assets rather than develop entirely new programs or facilities. The discussion suggests that success will depend on creating a coordinated network of trusted gathering places supported by consistent programming, effective communication, and reliable community partnerships.

Community assets and potential partners identified

Participants identified a broad range of potential gathering spaces and community partners.

Gathering Spaces

- Libraries
- Recreation centers
- Parks
- Churches
- Schools
- Restaurants and cafés
- Home gathering spaces
- Senior centers

Community Organizations

- AgeWise Colorado
- Food Bank
- Senior Planet
- Montbello Organizing Committee
- Families Forward
- Montbello 2020
- Local officials

Communication Channels

- Church bulletins
- Black business pages
- Grocery stores
- Urban Spectrum
- Radio
- Local newspapers

Participants also identified **transportation**, particularly expanded access through the Montbello Connector, as an important consideration for increasing participation.

Guidance for the working group

The next phase should focus on:

- Identifying priority gathering locations.
- Developing a Third Space activation tool kit.
- Strengthening partnerships among existing organizations.
- Expanding communication through trusted neighborhood channels.
- Exploring transportation solutions that increase participation.

Across all three work areas, participants repeatedly looked first to existing organizations, trusted institutions, neighborhood spaces, and local relationships as the foundation for advancing the work.

Looking Ahead

The 2026 Denver Black Aging Summit strengthened the work in Montbello in several important ways. It reaffirmed the community's commitment to three shared areas of work while providing greater clarity about how each should function in practice. Participants moved beyond broad concepts to identify the characteristics, partnerships, and resources needed to support successful implementation.

The Summit also expanded the community's understanding of the assets already present in Montbello. Participants identified organizations, institutions, gathering places, communication channels, and trusted leaders that can contribute to the work, reinforcing that the next phase is one of coordination and activation rather than creating entirely new systems.

Most importantly, the Summit provided each working group with clearer direction for the work ahead. In Peer Navigation and Technology Ministries, several foundational decisions have already been made, and the work now moves into recruitment, partnership activation, pilot design, and early implementation. Across all three strategies, the focus now is to organize partnerships, activate community capacity, and create tangible opportunities for Black elders to remain informed, connected, and engaged in community life.

About Aging While Black Denver

Aging While Black Denver is part of a broader national movement, [Aging While Black](#), to strengthen how Black elders experience care, connection, belonging, and dignity as they age.

Since late 2023, the Denver work has focused on listening to Black elders, building relationships with community partners, and identifying practical, community-rooted strategies that can strengthen the village of support across metro Denver.



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