

Biden Administration Official Visits North Omaha to discuss Community Engagement, Economic Development

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- On Friday, June 21, Omaha Innovation Connection Hub and Omaha 100 welcomed a high-profile visit by Biden Administration official Steve Benjamin, Assistant to the President, Senior Advisor to the President and Director of Public Engagement. The two organizations brought together community leaders, local organizations and representatives to discuss critical initiatives impacting Black, Indigenous and People of Color, as well as the broader Omaha community.

"The event showcased the power of partnerships and the importance of community-driven initiatives in fostering economic development and social equity in North Omaha," said Trevon Brooks, CEO of Omaha Innovation Connection Hub. The group spent the day touring a number of locations across Omaha, beginning with a breakfast meeting at the Dining Room, located at Seventy Five North Revitalization Corp, followed by a tour of North Omaha with Preston Love and Omaha City Councilwoman Juanita Johnson. The group also visited the Luminarium, the new Gene Leahy Mall in downtown Omaha, and paid a visit to The College World Series at Charles Schwab Field.

City of Omaha's Climate Action and Resiliency Plan

A major highlight of the discussion revolved around the City of Omaha's first climate action and resiliency plan, designed to address environmental challenges over the next 30 years. The plan emphasizes public engagement and innovative approaches to sustainability. "We're working on our city's first climate action resiliency plan...it's been going through the entire tech equity. So we appreciate the partnerships and economics there," Keith Station, Deputy Chief Of Staff -



Omaha Innovation Connection Hub and Omaha 100 hosted Biden Administration official Steve Benjamin, Assistant to the President, Senior Advisor to the President, and Director of Public Engagement.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion for the City of Omaha, shared.

North Omaha Revitalization Progress Community and Workforce Education leaders showcased their ongoing affordable housing projects and holistic community development efforts. Various organizations also introduced their initiatives in education, technology, public engagement, and financial services. Sharlon Rogers, the CEO of Seventy Five North Revitalization Corp, detailed the nonprofit's progress on mixed-income developments and the Choice Neighborhood implementation grant, which is essential for transforming local neighborhoods. "We have been awarded a Choice Neighborhood implementation grant...we're very proud of having that support," CEO Rogers stated. Taylor Wright, Senior Advisor at the White House Office of Public Engagement, emphasized the federal government's role in supporting local initiatives. "Our goal is to continue to be aware...to continue with leveraged legislation that we had here," Wright noted. He stressed the importance of centering community needs and leveraging federal resources for local impact.

The discussion transitioned to the Black Equity Initiative, focusing on investments in Black communities to address systemic disparities and promote economic development. This initiative aims to create significant opportunities and drive economic growth through targeted federal support.

Economic Development and Education

Local leaders highlighted the importance of economic revitalization through public and private investments, restoring historic buildings, and stimulating private sector growth. They also discussed the critical role of education and workforce development, particularly in manufacturing and technology sectors, for underserved communities.

Benjamin's visit and the engagement from the White House Office of Public Engagement highlighted the administration's commitment to supporting local communities, said Malinda Williams, CEO of Omaha 100.

Benjamin's background as the former Mayor of Columbia, South Carolina and his extensive experience in public service and academia also underscores his dedication to community engagement and public service, Williams added. "We are in the middle of a critical juncture in our nation's history," said Williams. "This visit reinforced the message that federal support and local initiatives can work hand-in-hand to drive meaningful change and create a more equitable future for all."

About Omaha 100

Omaha 100 (<http://www.omaha100.org/>) is a nonprofit community development financial institution (CDFI) based in Omaha, Neb., expanding financial equity and inclusion for people in the community seeking to achieve the "American Dream." Omaha 100 helps make owning a home or starting a business accessible to all through financial advocacy and education, with four main lines of financial-based support—mortgage lending, debt consolidation loans, business

lending and real estate development. Founded more than 30 years ago with a primary goal of building equity in homeownership, Omaha 100 has helped thousands upon thousands of low- and moderate-income families secure homeownership opportunities, many of whom have been first-time, first-generation homebuyers.

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