The Silver Tsunami: A Pivotal Moment for Black-Owned Businesses in Atlanta

Nearly half of Atlanta metro legacy business owners (firms 20+ years old with 3+ employees) are at or near retirement age (Project Equity). Baby Boomer business owners are retiring in record numbers—a trend called the **Silver Tsunami**. In Atlanta, this wave threatens thousands of Black-owned businesses that anchor our local economy and cultural fabric.

Why This Matters

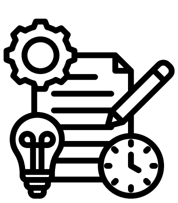
Black-owned businesses face distinct transition challenges:

- **Limited access to capital** makes it harder for the next generation to build or acquire successful companies. *Nationally, only 20% of Black business owners are approved for loans, lines of credit, and cash advances, compared to 33% or more for all other racial-ethnic groups (Kindred Futures).*
- **Absence of succession planning** puts these businesses, who are often woven into the community fabric at risk of closure. *Over 85% of Georgia business owners lack a succession plan (GACEO)*
- **Loss of these businesses would reduce Black wealth**, eliminate jobs, reduce goods and services available in Black neighborhood and weaken neighborhood economies. *The Atlanta region is home to 6,274 Black--owned businesses with employees (Project Equity).*

The Opportunity

This moment offers a historic wealth-building opportunity:

- Support emerging Black entrepreneurs in acquiring established firms.
- Preserve community anchor businesses through alternative ownership models such as worker cooperatives and employee ownership.
- Keep dollars, jobs, and cultural identity circulating within Black communities.
- Enable retiring owners to build generational wealth through planned transitions



Chrysalis Lab
Catalyzing social transformation

Preparing for the Silver Tsunami

The Implications

Without intentional action, communities risk:

- **Closure of long-standing Black-owned businesses** because heirs or local buyers lack financing or technical support.
- **Declines in local employment**
- **Loss of generational wealth** as businesses are liquidated instead of transferred.
- **Displacement**, with legacy Black enterprises replaced by outside owners or national chains.
- **Reduced entrepreneurship pathways** for aspiring entrepreneurs who could grow existing firms instead of starting from scratch.

Ways To Support This Work

Capital for Transitions

- Fund succession planning, legal support, and business valuations
- Provide micro-loans or investments to help employees or emerging entrepreneurs purchase businesses
- Offer bridge financing that unlocks traditional lending

Technical Assistance

- Cover business transition planning costs for retiring owners
- Support feasibility studies for employee ownership or cooperative conversions
- Fund mentorship between retiring owners and successor entrepreneurs

Considerations

- The is current **low awareness of succession planning options**, particularly alternative models like employee ownership. Outreach is needed to generate a greater understanding and interest in pursuing succession planning activities.
- Businesses have **competing priorities** focused on day-to-day operations and growth. Succession planning is often not a priority until the need to transition is imminent.
- Supporting business transitions, particulaly for employee ownership are **capital capital-intensive.**