Net-zero Renovation for the Niagara Falls Community Center

MY IDEA FOR CHANGE
The purpose of this project is to retrofit and rehabilitate the Niagara Falls Community Center. The center was once a major institution of its neighborhood, providing education (e.g. green certification, GED training, and health education), recreation, and wellness programs to surrounding residents and in particular the African American community. This program proposes a net-zero renovation for the center that uses labor from a job training program that teaches participants "green" job skills. This project would not only create much needed jobs in Niagara Falls, but it would also make the Center energy efficient and decrease its energy costs. Lower energy costs in turn would ensure the long term sustainability of the center. Once the center is renovated and re-opened, a variety of community-based programming will be offered there.

WHERE THE CHANGE WILL HAPPEN
The community center is located at the corner of Centre Avenue and 15th Street in Niagara Falls. It will benefit all residents in its neighborhood, and especially the African American community members. There has been a void in the community since the center's closing. It is time to reopen this institution and create a strategy that ensures its long term success.

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Planning a Change

ACTIONS TO MOVE IT FORWARD
Find funding to do an engineering study for the net-zero renovation
Develop additional partnerships
Create the workforce training program
Train the first class of “green” construction workers

RESOURCES NEEDED TO MAKE IT HAPPEN
Funding, Partnerships, Professional Services (accounting, legal, and engineering)

FUNDING RANGE
$200,000 plus

Bringing back the Niagara Falls Community Center through a net-zero renovation will not only create an environmentally and economically sustainable building, but will also create jobs, provide a place to deliver programs that enrich and empower residents, and serve as a prototype for other non-profit and governmental building retrofits.