



As Liberty Bank Building picks up another award, will the City follow through on Africatown Plaza?

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As the Liberty Bank Building wins the NAIOP affordable Housing Development of the Year award last week, the fate of Africatown Plaza, the affordable housing project that held so much promise is now in the City's hands.

Once the land was secured, Africatown and CHH started down the pre-development process which included feasibility studies, aligning partners, securing architects and technical experts, starting the design process as well as an interim activation of the block.

Fast forward two years later. With architectural team including GGLO, David Baker and Laurie Wilson in place and several well attended community design meetings under their belt in which the community was actively involved in the design process helping to envision a building that resonates with the history and culture of the neighborhood.

With all the boxes checked, Africatown submitted all required paperwork to the City of Seattle Office of Housing last month for project funding.

Africatown Plaza project seeks to build on the opening of the iconic and national

award winning Liberty Bank Building earlier this year which has proven to be a lightning rod for what is possible in regards to affordable housing in the Central District. ACLT has sought to be responsive to community needs with more family sized units and a design that incorporates Afrocentric design to combat cultural erasure, honor and celebrate the Black community that has made the Central District home for nearly 140 years, and maintain a sense of place.



Will the Black community that has been systematically displaced by past policies and practices of the government as acknowledged earlier this year by the State Legislature bill HB 1918, receive much need investment or will the process drag on as we have seen with the Central Area Senior Center, Byrd Barr Place, and Fire Station 6?

The previous Mayoral Administration took bold steps to move forward in supporting inclusive development at Liberty Bank Building and the acquisition of Midtown Center. [Current Mayor Jenny Durkan has praised Africatown's community led place based solutions saying that "I think Africatown will not just be a model for Seattle but for the nation"](#). Now is the time for her administration to align investment and advance economic justice on 23rd and Union.

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