



From the Pages of @AfricatownSea: Africatown Takes Root

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Its an exciting time in Seattle as the **Central District** bears witness to a new vision taking root and blooming into existence.

Amidst the reality of gentrification and displacement, the community has taken steps to curb the tide and make unprecedented moves to repatriate Black Seattleites back to the neighborhood that has been the center of the community for almost 140 years.

[Africatown Community Land Trust](#) has been a leading voice in making sure that the Black community has a place in the future of Seattle, with projects that draw inspiration from the citys legacy of Black success to inspire the communitys vision for whats to come.

The award winning [Liberty Bank Building](#), Africatowns flagship development, opened in 2019 on the site of the first Black-owned bank west of the Mississippi River and provides 115 units of much-needed affordable housing.

The project also includes affordable retail space and is home to the celebrated eatery, [Communion R&B](#), co-owned by **Chef Kristi Brown** and her son, **Damon Bomar**. Legacy barbershop, , has also made its home at LBB and [Cafe Avole](#) is slated to open a new location there this summer.

Just one block south on 24th and Spring, plans are well underway for the development of [Africatown Plaza](#). Although construction isnt scheduled to begin until December 2021, ACLT launched a major effort to incorporate the works of Black artists into the early stages of the design and planning process.

Africatown Community Land Trusts Call for Art in partnership with [Wa Na Wari](#), accepted submissions for a wide variety of visual forms from local, national and inter- national artists that will make the 126 unit building a cultural destination as well as a residential space.

Africatown Community Land Trust has also begun redevelopment of the new [William Grose Center for Cultural Innovation and Enterprise](#), formerly Fire Station 6, on 23rd and Yesler.

In a hard fought victory, the City of Seattle handed over the keys to the site in June 2020 after nearly a decade of community advocacy. In the early stages of its development,

WGC seeks your contribution to what will be a hub for activating local genius and talents through the creation of a Black tech ecosystem for the Central District.

The **[Keiro Building](#)**, also on Yesler, is another testament to the power of community organizers who, in 2021, successfully halted the development of unaffordable, market-rate housing. Africatown Community Land Trust has proposed immediate use of the building as temporary shelter and initiated a community planning process for long-term redevelopment to provide a full square block of up to 300 units of affordable housing.

Meanwhile, **[Village Gardens](#)** is under development by ACLT in partnership with **[Homestead Community Land Trust](#)** and led by a team of Black contractors. The project will sell 14 new town homes for \$300,000, less than half of the current market value of \$800,000. Purchase priority will be given to Black families previously displaced from the Central District.

Africatown Community Land Trust is also working to develop its own affordable homeownership project two blocks south of the Colman School Building and Jimi Hendrix Park.

With these successes to celebrate and many more to come, what do you imagine for the future of Africatown?

Visit www.africatownlandtrust.org for opportunities to share your vision and participate in bringing it to life.