

Village Bottoms Cultural District at Pine Street

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Cover: Marcel Diallo moves a late 1800's black-owned cottage with a forklift to prevent its demolition. It was standing in the path of the new I-880 freeway.

Urban Neighborhood Redesign from the Bottoms Up

In 2000, a group of young black artists, entrepreneurs, and community organizers got together with the vision of restoring the historic West Oakland Lower Bottoms neighborhood and returning it once again into a vibrant commercial and residential hub. They purchased commercial buildings, homes and vacant lots on Pine and Wood Streets, relocated the Black Dot Artist Collective's headquarters, and launched the Black New World performance venue.

Coupling a keen sense of ancestry with an openness to reach out and pool resources has proven an effective recipe for an authentic 21st century inner city revival movement. This bottom-up approach to urban planning with its emphasis on cultural roots has models ranging from San Francisco's renowned Chinatown and Little Italy, to New York's 1920s Harlem, to New Orleans' French Quarter. A strong sense of identity coupled with local economic stakes adds to the character and flair needed to attract a steady flow of patrons and shoppers, the lifeblood of any successful business district. In the words of Black Dot Artist Marcel Diallo, "Everybody needs a Black cultural district just like everybody needs a Chinatown or a Little Italy."

This document is the result of a cooperative effort between Black Dot Artists Inc., Village Bottoms Neighborhood Association, Village Bottoms Community Development Corporation and Oakland-based ecological urban planning nonprofit Ecocity Builders. The immediate focus is anchored on historic Pine Street between 7th Street and 12th Street, linking the emerging Central Station neighborhood development site and the already established West Oakland BART transit-oriented development.

The parties involved worked together with a shared belief that in order to achieve long-term sustainability, a comprehensive and integrated approach is needed. If successful, this cooperative model could guide a transition of Oakland's built environment into a new regional vision of economically, environmentally and socially healthy "urban villages" of various sizes and characteristics, powered largely by clean, renewable energy and linked primarily by greenways, trails and natural corridors.



The approach could be adapted to other Bay Area cities to meet local, state and regional goals of greenhouse gas emissions

and carbon footprint reduction, sustainable development, environmental quality and community health, and economic stability.

West Oakland Black Cultural History

[The Heydays]



1874

Oscar T. Jackson, minstrel performer, barbershop keeper and one of the earliest documented Black residents of West Oakland, lives on 7th and Pine Sts.



1882

Captain William Shorey, first Black whaling ship captain on the Pacific, lives on 8th & Pine Sts. in West Oakland with family.



1920

C.L. Dellums leads the Pullman Porters Union.



1940

WWII industrial boom brings black workers from the south.



1950

A vibrant jazz and blues district thrives on 7th Street in West Oakland.



1960

West Oakland becomes a hub for Black Panther activism.



Captain William T. Shorey and family



Historic Downtown Oakland near 7th Street



Historic West Oakland looking toward San Francisco



Mary Netherland, daughter of Oscar T. Jackson, and educator.

Settling a Place 1870s-1930s

The Central Pacific Railroad's choice for Oakland to be the western terminus of its transcontinental line defined West Oakland's local landscape and community development. With the completion of Oakland Point Wharf in 1871, West Oakland, and especially the Oakland Point neighborhood (today often referred to as the Lower Bottoms), turned into a virtual railway workers' village, where railway craftsmen, operators and administrators all worked and settled in great numbers.

The Point grew into a neighborhood comprising mostly small and modest working- and middle-class dwellings, punctuated by shops, boardinghouses, and hotels. Among these first settlers were barber Oscar T. Jackson, whose 1874 house was recently saved by forklift relocation (see booklet cover), and ship captain William Shorey (opposite upper left photo), whose 1880s era house has been restored and is awaiting historic status designation.

The many-tiered nature of work at a large railroad afforded opportunities to a wide spectrum of people, ranging from poor, newly arrived European immigrants to middle-class native-born Americans with established skills and trades. By

1880, a core group of African-Americans had established themselves as railroad porters working for the Pullman Palace Car Company. By the early 1900s African-American men had branched out into such other jobs as carpentry, painting, barbering, hotel work, and bar-tending. C. L. Dellums, uncle of current Oakland mayor Ron Dellums, was a union organizer for Pullman Porters in the 1920s. African-American women worked as hairdressers, dressmakers, domestics, nurses, and midwives. The Creole Kitchen is said to have been a women-run restaurant.

"Seventh Street was not only the route for the Red Trains that ran every 20 minutes, but had also become the main artery for the growing automobile traffic to and from the auto ferries."

The early 20th century was a time of growth and prosperity for West Oakland. Unscathed by the 1906 earthquake, West Oakland became home to relocated San

Francisco businesses, giving its wharves and railways new importance. World War I ushered in a new level of economic and industrial activities. A growing fleet of ferries and an influx of new workers brought new prosperity. Seventh Street was not only the route for the Red Trains that ran every 20 minutes, but had become the main artery for growing automobile traffic to and from the auto ferries. This period witnessed an influx of African-Americans from the South, who gravitated towards the established enclave.



The business district at 7th and Pine Streets.

A Center of Gravity 1930s-1970s

World War II brought the construction of the huge Oakland Army Base and Naval Supply Depot, bolstering West Oakland's economy and creating new manufacturing employment opportunities. By 1930, West Oakland was a thriving, ethnically diverse neighborhood of about 280,000 residents. Seventh Street was lined with jazz and blues clubs such as Slim Jenkin's Supper Club. C. L. Dellums was a central figure in trying to push for fair employment laws that would secure labor and civil rights beyond a wartime economy.

By 1950, West Oakland had gained a reputation as a smokestack city of blue-collar teamsters, craft workers, factory operatives, and dockworkers. Throughout the 1950s C.L. Dellums continued to fight for fairness in labor and civil rights, and in 1959, he was appointed to California's first Fair Employment Practice Commission.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, West Oakland underwent a period of intense physical change. Many of these changes coincided with a period of economic decline characterized by unemployment, poverty, and urban blight. West Oakland became a primarily working class African-American neighborhood, with a small Hispanic population. Groups of African-American residents of West Oakland mobilized to resist the "urban renewal" projects and blatant racism during this period. The Black Panthers grew out of this resistance and West Oakland became the center of the Black Panthers in the late 1960s.

"By 1930, West Oakland was a thriving, ethnically diverse neighborhood of about 280,000 residents. Seventh Street was lined with jazz and blues clubs."

1930

Many black residents are unable to move to other neighborhoods due to “red-lining” or real estate discrimination starting in the 1930s and continuing until 1960s.

1936



Bay Bridge is completed. Seventh Street is no longer the main thoroughfare connecting Oakland to ferry terminals.

1940



WWII ends in 1945, causing major decline in wartime industry in Oakland.

Peralta Village is established amid stiff resistance from the community in 1940.

Unmaking West Oakland

[Seminal Events]



1950

Cypress Freeway is constructed effectively cutting West Oakland off from the Downtown.



1958

Twelve square blocks bordering 7th Street are destroyed to make way for a Post Office Center. Construction begins six years after demolition.



1960

An aboveground BART track is built along 7th Street, further hastening its decline.

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City Council Approves Redevelopment Plan

VICTORIA ROW BLACKS FORCED TO MOVE

(Oakland, Calif.) - The future of the predominantly poor and minority residents and business owners of the Victoria Row community here remains uncertain following last Tuesday's City Council vote to redevelop the decaying, two-square block area in downtown Oakland.

The city has reassured residents and proprietors in the area bounded by Broadway, Eighth, Washington and Tenth streets that they will be given some financial and other assistance in moving. However, numerous people on Victoria Row - named after the architectural style that predominates the community - are fearful that they will literally be left out in the cold once reconstruction begins.

Under the plan approved by the City Council, the Oakland Redevelopment Agency will buy all the properties on Victoria Row, and sell them to the San Francisco architectural



Economics + Segregation 1930s - 1980s

World War II - industry booms then busts

The spatially separate war-time industry did not integrate well with the community. While the overall population had grown significantly, many West Oaklanders who had done well during the war moved away afterward to what they hoped would be a better life in the suburbs. Unemployment and occupational downgrading hit postwar African-American communities hard. By the 1950s unemployment among Oakland's African-American workers had risen 20 percent, twice the rate for white workers.

Red-lining, racial steering and restrictive covenants

It is widely assumed that West Oakland was the subject of red-lining, a practice began by the National Housing Act of 1934 and the establishment of the Federal Housing Administration. The private sector followed this practice of housing discrimination, denying or increasing the cost of such services as banking, insurance, access to jobs, access to health care, or even supermarkets to residents in certain predetermined, mostly black inner city neighborhoods. Marking a red line on a map to delineate the area where banks would not invest, middle or upper income blacks were priced out of lower income white neighborhoods. Racial steering was practiced by real estate brokers who guided prospective home buyers towards or away from certain neighborhoods based on race. More outright were restrictive covenants which specifically forbade Blacks from moving into new development projects in the East Bay.

Zoned for heavy industry

In the mid-1930s, West Oakland was officially zoned for heavy industry, which led to added residential fragmentation, noise and pollution. Although few houses were actually replaced by industry, the maintenance, morale and property values of the area declined with this designation.

Tearing the Urban Fabric 1950s - 1970s

Cypress Freeway

When the Cypress Freeway, an elevated double-decker freeway connecting the Bay Bridge with the Nimitz Freeway, replaced Cypress Street in the 1950s, it demolished ten city blocks and effectively split the neighborhood in half, isolating it from downtown Oakland. Homes were destroyed, families relocated, and the character of the area was changed by both a physical and visual barrier.

Post Office Distribution Center

Urban planners in the 1960s, attempting to demonstrate inclusiveness toward a disadvantaged community, imposed a massive post office facility on the neighborhood. Destroying six blocks of Bayview Tract houses from the 1870s and leaving the cleared land barren for half a decade, the post office further assaulted the remaining integrity of the historic 7th Street corridor.

West Oakland BART

The construction of BART in the 1960s further accelerated the decline of the 7th Street business district. Much of the Black commercial buildings were torn down for BART, greatly reducing available services. After its 1972 completion, the visual blight of elevated tracks leading to and from the West Oakland station left Seventh Street less desirable as a destination.



Cypress and 8th Streets in West Oakland before "renewal." Inhabited houses were replaced with modern apartment blocks and tenants from outside the community.

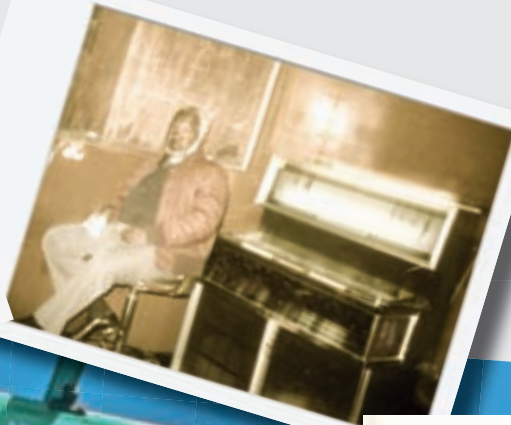


BART tracks being constructed along 7th Street, the entertainment hub of West Oakland.



Photocopy of original photo

A Sherman tank demolishes historic homes in West Oakland to make room for a Post Office Distribution Center



*WLC Social Club, at Pine and 7th Streets.
Willie and Lillie stand at the former location of the club.*

WLC Social Club

[Where Pine and 7th Streets Met]

We used to have a business at 7th & Pine Streets in the early 1980s. It was a social club for seniors. It was called WLC Social Club, after our names Willie and Lillie. But when the state rerouted the freeway after it fell in the earthquake of 1989, they wanted to build it right where our businesses were so they gave the owners of the buildings money to relocate. Bought all the buildings and tore them down. We rented our building from KC's Barbeque. I can find receipts to show that at the time it was a very successful business. We ended up having a business on 7th & Pine, because Lillie's brother had a business there a few doors down. The Social Club paid pretty good. We had a juke box and pool tables that you had to put money in. But the main thing was that we stayed open 24/7. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Six to three, three to eleven, eleven to seven were the shifts. It was continually open all night. We did very good in the business. We use to always have food for everybody. Christmas dinner and things like that. All these older people in the neighborhood sitting in these houses needed somewhere to go, so we provided that for them. There were also a few "undesirables" that would hang out and mess with the older people, so we were there and sorta protected them from that element. It was was a little social club, but it was really a nice place.

- Willie and Lillie Agnew (Marcel Diallo's Great Uncle and Auntie)

Black Cultural Re-emergence in the Bottoms

[Economic Self-Reliance]



1996

Marcel Diallo
founds the Black
Dot Artists
collective in
Oakland.

1998

Black Dot Café
and Ritual Space
opens at 23rd
and E. 14th Sts.

2000

Diallo and friends
pool resources
and acquire first
parcel of land
within the old
Jenkins auto
wrecking yard at
10th and Pine Sts.

2001

Black Dot
Artists
establish a
field office
in a trailer
at 10th and
Pine Sts.

2004

Black Dot
headquarters
move to
924 Pine St.
Campaign
begins to
move 50
young black
artists
back to the
Bottoms.



2005

2006

2008

2009

Black New World, a performance and multi-use venue, opens at 836 Pine St.

Cornelia Bell's Black Bottom Gallery opens with a successful show of local artwork and ongoing first Friday artists showing.

Established Soul Foods Co-op at 10th and Wood.

Black Dot Cafe, JuJu Shop move into newly completed Pacific Cannery Lofts, a Holliday Development project.

Village Bottoms Farm launches.

Village Bottoms partners with Ecocity Builders to create a master plan for the Black Cultural District and begins retrofit of the Black New World.

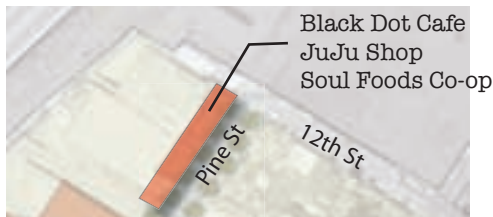


African statues watch over the JuJu Shop and Black Dot Café in the Pacific Cannery Lofts, a result of engagement and collaboration between the Village Bottoms Community and Holliday Development.

Engagement + Collaboration 2000s

The last eight years have seen the beginnings of a revitalized Pine Street corridor. New storefronts have opened and local residents are moving into refurbished historic houses. In what has been a model of engagement and collaboration, the Village Bottoms Neighborhood Association (VBNA) has been working closely with developer Rick Holliday, whose Central Station/Pacific Cannery Lofts project will bring up to 1,500 new residences to the neighborhood.

After establishing a level of mutual understanding with Holliday, community leader Marcel Diallo organized several tours of the new development for community members. A collaborative including Diallo, East Bay Community Law Center, and Holliday Development then petitioned the City of Oakland and successfully obtained first-time buyer and low-income assistance for 40 of the units. In 2008, local resident Charles Allensworth became the first buyer at the new development, a symbolic testament to the power of positive engagement. A worker-owner of Rainbow Grocery for 20 plus years, Allensworth is also active in the Soul Foods Cooperative grocery store currently operating in the groundfloor of Pacific Cannery Lofts. The VBNA has also collaborated with Biren Talati, principal of Sandalstone LLC, to faithfully restore the Captain William Shorey house, which will eventually become a historic museum.





The Black New World

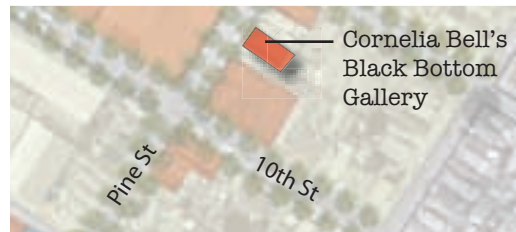
Is a nonprofit membership club dedicated to advancing the art, music, spirituality, culture, folkways, and neighborhoods of black people. While dedicated to promoting the economic well-being of low-income black communities, it is open to all ethnicities. The multi-use space has hosted numerous cultural events, including performances by Jazz trumpeter Eddie Gale; the New Orleans Brass Band, Rebirth; and artist Emory Douglas.





Cornelia Bell's Black Bottom Gallery

Is creative headquarters to some of Oakland's finest artists. This Victorian-turned-gallery and artist residency has hosted dozens of exhibits and residencies by local artists such as Githinji wa Mbire, Eesuu Orundide, Duane Deterville, Kimara Dixon, Marcel Diallo, and others. These community-based artists use their talents to further the revitalization efforts of the Village Bottoms Cultural District.



"Only an artist could look at a scrap yard and see a future cultural district."

-Marcel Diallo



Site condition before purchase

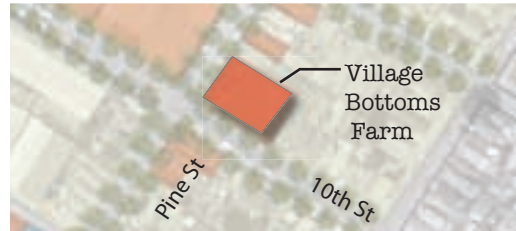


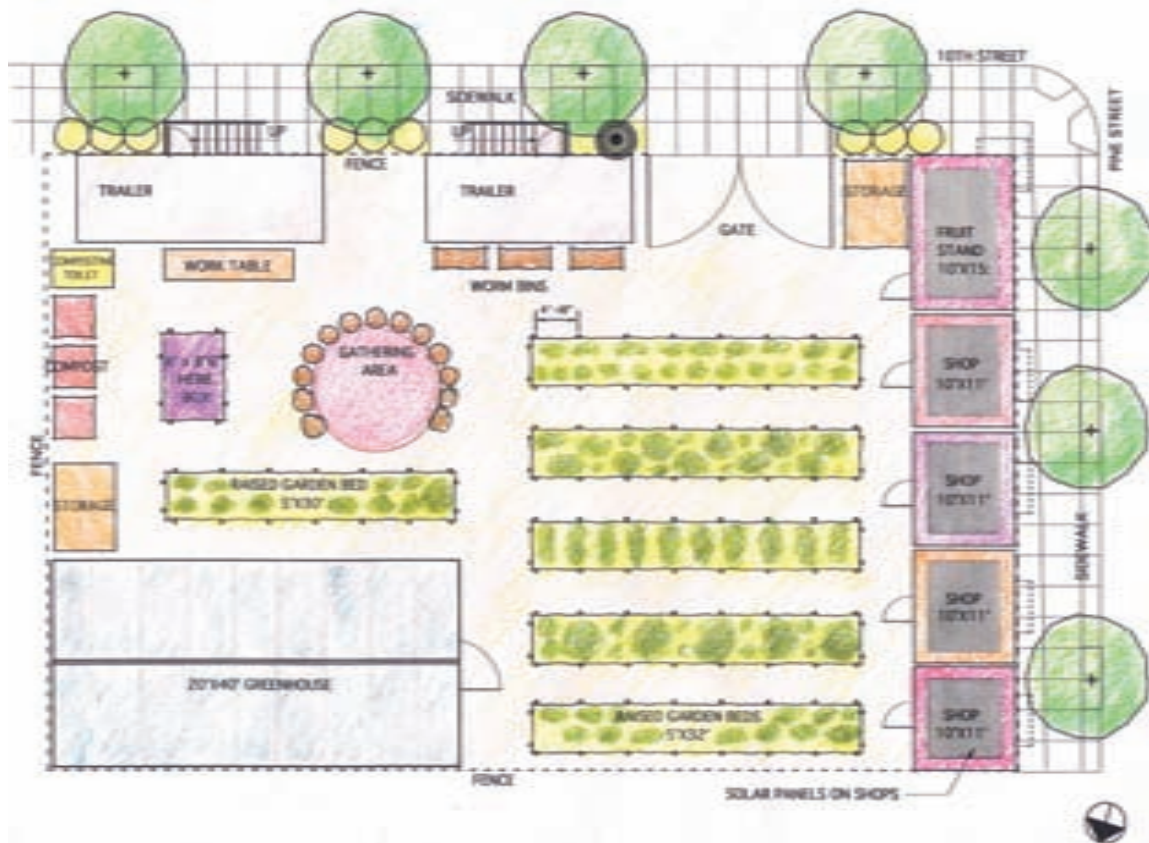
Aquaponics system under construction



Village Bottoms Farm

Is a self-determined effort to grow and sell fish and vegetables in a sustainable manner, and eliminate the barriers that prevent black re-engagement with the land. The farm is located on the site of a former auto junk yard. When completed, it will feature an aquaponics (aquaculture + greens) system based on a design by Will Allen, a MacArthur “Genius” Award recipient.





Village Bottoms Farm Plan

The plan outlined in the following pages showcases a community's vision for a new and vibrant urban fabric that builds on the past decade of "bottoms up" redevelopment.

The Village Bottoms Cultural District is an effort to maintain historically significant, black cultural presence in West Oakland in the face of rapid gentrification. The goal is to nurture culturally relevant enterprises and grow self-determined, self-reliant people in the historic Village Bottoms Cultural District. Neighborhood volunteers' efforts drive the construction and operation of the performance arts center, urban farm, gallery, cafe, and grocery store.

Future development ideas include shipping containers transformed as artist studios and retail opportunities. Cultural elements include public plazas, a parade route, and a Black Folklife Center. Architectural features include street-front balconies and porches that draw from the black mecca of New Orleans, the point of entry into America for many enslaved African peoples, and the place of ancestry for many residents of West Oakland and the Lower Bottoms.

Their life journeys and poignant stories will be celebrated through the offerings of this emerging cultural district. The voices and struggles of the past will be preserved and woven into the present, with an eye to a more equitable and sustainable future.

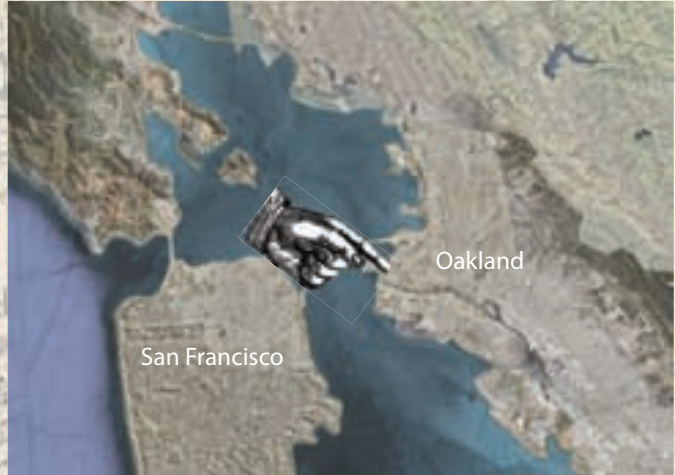


Village Bottoms Cultural District

[Conceptual Plan]

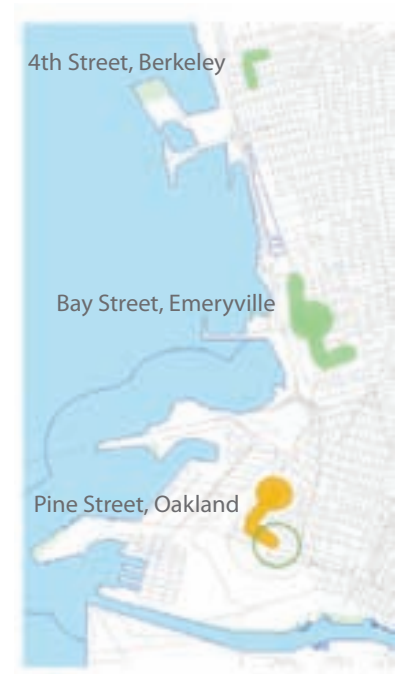


Where is the Village Bottoms?



Regional Economic Development Patterns

West Oakland is poised to become a multi-modal urban village with two dense transit centers connected by an axis of economic and cultural activity. The cultural district fits within a well established pattern of economic/retail development along the western edge of the East Bay. However, while the Bay Street and Fourth Street districts are typically visited by car, the Village Bottoms district will also be easily accessible by train, foot, and bike.



Constraints + Potential at Village Bottoms

These maps consolidate much of the “bottoms up” planning work that has taken place in the neighborhood since 2000, and provide a spatial and formal foundation for the Village Bottoms Conceptual Plan.

Much of the site information was obtained from the Village Bottoms Neighborhood Association. Site inventories, design charrettes, and planning research were also conducted by Ecocity Builders.



Viewshed



Villages Bottoms
Cultural District



Vacant Lots



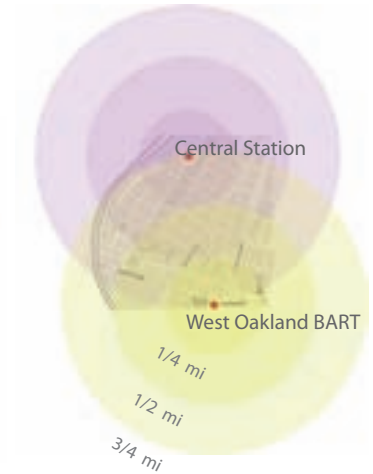
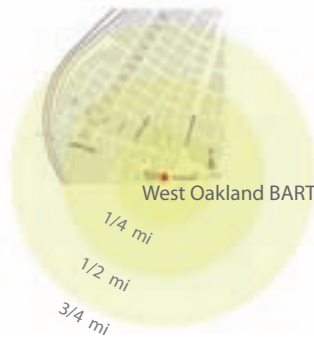
Land Use
Designations



Bike
Pedestrian
Auto
Bus



Circulation



Distance: 1 Ring = 1/4 Mile = 5-Minute Walk



Air Pollution

Neighborhood Condition [c. 2004]

The Village Bottoms neighborhood is home to several large vacant industrial sites in varying stages of vacancy or re-development. There is very little street tree canopy. While the Pine and 7th Streets corridors have always been transportation crossroads, they are now overwhelmed by transportation networks that are much larger than the neighborhood scale.



Cultural District Staging

- Pine Street Commercial Zone
- Cultural District [stage 1]
- Cultural District [stage 2]
- Central Station Housing
- Infill or Reuse Potential

Stage 1 of the community plan calls for intensive economic and infill development along Pine Street. The street will serve as the neighborhood hub and a foundation for the future expansion of the cultural district (Stage 2). The street meets and fully integrates with the Central Station housing development to the north and with a restored 7th Street to the south. Buildings or spaces with a high potential for reuse during Stage 1 are highlighted.



Vegetated Buffer

- bamboo
- native trees
- orchard

Black Folklife Center

- rooftop vistas
- grassy terraces

Plaza

- sculpture garden w/ monuments to local Black heroes
- green stormwater features
- space for public gatherings
- views of San Francisco preserved across site

Conservatory

- aquaculture
- tropical plants

Bike Path

- connects Ironworks to 7th Street

Black Dot Cafe [2007]

Village Bottoms Gateway + Farm

Landmark Tower

Greenway Park

Container Housing Infill

Urban Farm and Mixed Use Green Building

Ironworks

Pine Street

Wood Street



Conceptual Plan Elements

Urban Design

Increase density along Pine Street. Use ground floor space in new and existing building for commercial purposes, e.g. Black Dot Cafe in Pacific Cannery Lofts.

Towers made of shipping containers mark gateways to the neighborhood.

Brick street pavers mimic New Orleans, sidewalks are enlarged for cafe seating, and rainwater is brought to the surface.

Landscape

Urban agriculture produces food and reduces the neighborhood carbon footprint.

Rainwater from the plaza and the museum is channeled to a dynamic and artful water feature.

A vegetated buffer strip is used to filter air pollution from the nearby freeways and port, while also functioning as a productive urban forest.

The Greenway park provides a more direct pedestrian and bike route to West Oakland BART, as well as space for an ecological and agricultural uses.

A bike path connects the former Ironworks to 7th Street which in turn connects the waterfront to West Oakland BART and downtown Oakland.

“We hope to create a place like Harlem in the 1920s and ‘30s”

-Eesuu Orundide

Pine Street Scenes

"Cities are starting to look like suburbs. If they want to remain competitive, they need to lift up what's already there and differentiate themselves."

- Lisa Servon, New School for Social Research







Pine Street Cross Section

This street elevation demonstrates the intensification of commercial activity along Pine Street, coupled with increased housing densities, based on original sketches by Letitia Ntofon. New building heights are carefully integrated with historic Victorians. Density increases nearer to the Central Station development and the area transitions from an industrial to a mixed use community. The image at far right displays the businesses that are poised to open, once shipping container structures are built at 10th and Pine Streets, a property currently owned by Village Bottoms Neighborhood Association.





Pine Street Activated

This conceptual illustration highlights many of the key features of the Village Bottoms Plan. Higher density buildings with first floor retail that use local and inexpensive materials such as shipping containers. Street life that celebrates local residents' historical relationship to industry and to New Orleans.







District Gateway

[Pine and 10th Streets]

The intersection of Pine and 10th Streets serves as a key gateway to the Village Bottoms Cultural District. This conceptual drawing emphasizes the importance of higher density along this street, with first-floor retail, produce market, flexible artisan/agricultural spaces, and enhanced pedestrian corridor. The building architecture combines the local aesthetic of shipping containers with second- and third-story street front porches indigenous to New Orleans.



Greenway Mini Park

[Chase and Pine Streets]

This conceptual image features an important component of urban village design: shifting densities. Vital areas are further densified while open space is consolidated for sustainable/agricultural parks and greenways. In the Lower Bottoms, much of the open space takes the form of vacant lots. This particular cluster of under maintained lots was identified as having the potential to hasten the walk to and from the West Oakland BART station.









Center for Black Folklife

Oakland meets Africa at the former Phoenix Ironworks site, where this brownfield is transformed into a dynamic public space anchored by a the Center for Black Folklife, featuring an African-American Quilt Museum, slavery era artifacts and ephemera, and a collection of pre-colonial African art. Plans for the site also include an atrium/greenhouse that houses a tropical plant conservatory and a large aquaponics systems for the production of tropical fish such as tilapia.

The plaza and green terraces house a sculpture garden featuring tributes to local black heroes, and local artwork. Towers made of shipping containers mark gateways to the neighborhood, and form a piazza built with vernacular and reused materials.

A vegetated buffer strip is used to filter air pollution from the nearby freeways and port, while also functioning as a productive urban forest. It also frames a view of San Francisco, an indispensable portal to the outside world.

A cobbled path connects the Ironworks Plaza to the Greenway Mini Park across the street.

Implications for Urban Sustainability

[Cultural + Ecological Resilience]

[Greenhouse Gas Reduction]

[Urban Village Planning Toolkit]

- a. Transfer of Development Rights
- b. Form-Based Code
- c. Oakland General Plan

Cultural + Ecological Resilience

[A partnership between Ecocity Builders and the Village Bottoms]

In early 2009, Ecocity Builders and Village Bottoms Community Development Corporation formed an agreement defining their collaboration. Essentially, both organizations agree that the realization of the Village Bottoms Cultural District can serve as a model for community-based sustainable and equitable urban development and could be shared with other areas in Oakland and throughout the Bay Area. The community plan, they said, will be anchored in a neighborhood vitality and needs assessment, linked to the larger community, and strives to accurately describe and communicate the vision, hopes and dreams of the residents. Both organizations also agreed to enter into more detailed projects as appropriate, if those initiatives fell within the scope and framework of their shared goals and objectives.

The Village Bottoms Community Development Corporation works towards and promotes community cohesion and security while preserving the historical integrity of the Village Bottoms. They are reclaiming West Oakland's rich African-American history and cultural contributions to the Bay Area. Ecocity Builders is a nonprofit organization founded in 1992 to promote and redesign the built human habitat in balance with living systems. Their goals include returning healthy biodiversity to the heart of cities, agriculture to neighborhoods and the streets,

and convenience and pleasure to walking, bicycling and transit.

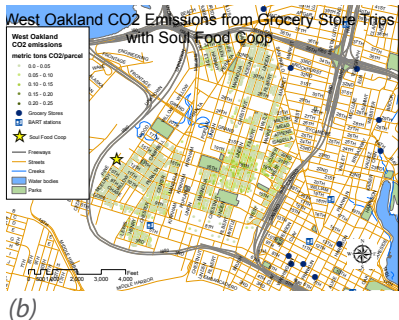
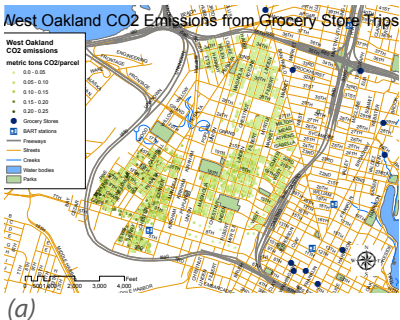
The two groups believe that through careful land use planning and a participatory community engagement process, sustainable communities can be designed around widely-accepted principles of sustainability i.e. clean and friendly environments with a reduced reliance on cars; environmental justice and social equity; and providing economic opportunities through local green business opportunities for residents of sustainable communities.



Ecocity mapping for existing and potential urban villages in Oakland 49

Greenhouse Gas Reductions

The Village Bottoms Cultural District not only has the potential to revive the socio-economic potential of an historic neighborhood, it will also contribute to the city's and region's goal of reducing carbon emissions. Village Bottoms can save Oakland 160,000 barrels of oil per year, or an equivalent to 67,200 tons of CO₂, by 2020. In a study during the summer of 2009, Ecocity Builders examined how introducing a grocery store into Village Bottoms would improve CO₂ emissions related to grocery store trips in the area. The study found that CO₂ emissions would be reduced by 34.20 tons per year if the store was introduced to the neighborhood, serving both Village Bottoms and Pacific Cannery Lofts. Ecocity Builders also found that the Village Bottoms Farm could offset 20.76 tons of carbon per year. For further information, please reference Ecocity Builder's Urban Village report for the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD).



(a) depicts current day CO₂ emissions per residential parcel in West Oakland. With the addition of Soul Food Co-operative, many of the parcels in West Oakland would produce far fewer emissions (b).

Urban Village Planning Toolkit

Transfer of Development Rights

Transfer of development rights (TDR) is a market-based technique that encourages the voluntary transfer of growth from places where a community would like to see less development, or sending areas, to places where a community would like to see more development, or receiving areas. The sending areas can be environmentally-sensitive properties, open space, agricultural land, wildlife habitat, historic landmarks or any other places that are important to a community. The receiving areas should be places that the general public has agreed are appropriate for extra development because they are close to jobs, shopping, schools, transportation and other urban services.



existing development pattern



proposed w/ higher diversity and density

Form-Based Code

Form-based codes offer a method of regulating development to achieve a specific urban form and create a predictable public realm primarily by controlling physical form, with a lesser focus on land use, through city or county regulations.

Form-based codes seek to influence:

- The relationship between the building facades and the public realm
- The form and mass of buildings in relation to one another
- The scale and types of streets and buildings

This is in contrast to conventional focus of zoning on the micromanagement and segregation of land uses, and the control of development intensity through abstract and uncoordinated parameters.

Oakland General Plan

Land Use and Transportation Element (LUTE) policies should support land use patterns that bring together a wide range of distinct yet compatible uses, so that daily life, work and shopping needs can be met within a small geographic area. The emphasis should be on density and diversity of uses that create a sense of place, rather than low density auto dependent communities.

Village Bottoms and the Oakland Green City Goals

The Village Bottoms Cultural District, with its exceptionally active property owners, provides an excellent opportunity for a Oakland Green City pilot project. The political climate both at the city, state and national levels is strongly supportive of development goals that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce driving, and rebuild communities impacted by the housing downturn.

The graph below highlights some of these trends that could further the goal of a citywide green master plan and within it, the Village Bottoms Cultural District and other sustainable urban villages. In the long run, our perspective stems from concern about increasing energy prices and dwindling

natural resources and jobs to sustain our cities and civilization. Ultimately, we need to: (1) Reshape cities for the long term health of both people and nature; (2) Face our growing economic problems through a local resiliency approach; (3) Assure that society provides an important place for people who have historically been marginalized from the basic necessities essential to a quality life.

All of these concerns must be addressed if we are to solve the environmental, energy and economic problems of the future that are beginning to come due today. We hope that you will join us in support of this important work.



Contact/Support

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