

Othello Goals and Strategies

- I have been impressed with the friendliness and supportiveness of my neighbors in this diverse neighborhood. Othello neighborhood is a treasure that should be preserved and built upon, not a blank slate to be developed.
- How will these ideas be translated into reality? What will be the mechanisms for evaluation of proposed developments? Who will be the stewards of the community plan?
- Gateway features.
- What plans do you have for livable wage jobs? (focus on youth) and upward mobility?
- Concurrency. Park space should be identified and acquired before or at same time as upzones.
- We need a policy to preserve and increase the tree canopy.
- Promote home-based businesses (allow for signage? allow walk in customers?) as economic opportunities for women and as incubators for companies to grow large enough to occupy commercial space.
- Make the civic space usable in the rain (i.e. have a covered area , if not a building)
- Regarding the goal of creating a safe environment and the associated strategy of encouraging dense development in the town center – Dense development is not a goal or strategy in the town center section. It needs to be put in the town center section or the safety section needs to be modified to reflect what is said in the town center section.
- We need development standards in the Land Use Code to enforce these goals.
- Use Land Trusts to create affordable housing.
- Family housing must be required (greater than 2 bedroom units), as well as amenities for families.
- This process has a fatal flaw – comprehensive planning should direct provisions for infrastructure (roads/institutions, etc). There has been no discussion of how to provide for the capital improvements needed for the increased densities proposed.
- Zoning to create business opportunities. Down zone so that low cost building types can be built for light manufacturing.
- Create sustainable/affordable safety strategies by providing interpretation and translation services for organizing grass root, resident-led community groups.
- Do a health impact assessment to reduce health disparities
- Support the preservation of industrial zoning south of Henderson as a location for family wage jobs in green industries to locate and for Othello neighborhood residents to have direct access to.
- Regarding connections – restore bus service on Renton Ave.
- A responsible and neutral person must help the new African immigrants in their ethnic language.
- Mostly I like the Othello draft goals and strategies. I object to G under the goal “encourage a range of housing types...” Minimum residential densities open the door to development which cannot be sustained by the current infrastructure.
- The goals are excellent. What will be the follow-up? Development proposals should be evaluated in light of these goals.

Post it note comments on the Othello materials presented

- A very important way to prevent and/or curb gentrification is the concept of “business condos” – incentives for existing small businesses to “buy” the zone/lot of their existing locations. They can grow their business and use the ownership to lend and also sell it back when they move away but at the original selling price, not the market value. “Linh Thai”

Othello Places and Connections

- This neighborhood can absorb a lot of development with the existing zoning.
- Need incentives for established businesses to stay in the area.
- Thanks for the effective displays. Very easy to understand the proposals.

Othello Existing Zoning

- Prefer Option O – status quo, no upzones. Upzones not needed at Othello - too crowded at Othello/MLK intersection. New development already happening – want upzones on a project basis, not on parcels. Project basis allows more community control.
- Given the high proportion of vacant lots and one story buildings, I believe existing zoning is sufficient. Any exceptions should be decided on a case-by-case basis. Density will increase dramatically when lots are developed. We don't need to go faster than that.
- This process needs to be followed with a process to draft an ordinance which would add development standards for the Othello neighborhood in the Land Use Code if a developer wants to increase density above the current zoning.
- Please think East-West to connect Seward Park/Brighton to light rail station, park etc. Lighting and sidewalks are needed – no parking allowed on sidewalks.
- Upzoning must depend on an urban design framework. We neighbors need to be a part of making sure that attractive plazas, set-backs, wide sidewalks, etc., are included. An urban design framework should be created in advance of any development.

Othello Option 1: Core 85' Alternative

- Create a specific urban design framework for how the buildings address the street and create that essential corner and open space relationship.
- Any 85' building must: set back top 20 feet so they are not obvious from the street; exchange the OK to build to 85' for a public benefit (immediate) such as money for park-like space, fountain, public meeting space, etc.
- MLK is wide enough to have 85' buildings and to get a strong building wall-to-street width ratio.
- Make MLK at Othello pedestrian friendly – especially with plaza at corner
- I oppose Option 1. We don't need 85' buildings. Also, this block includes King Plaza, an already vital commercial space and one that maintains cultural diversity. It should not be torn down
- Increased density should be tied to the developer demonstrating under the Master Use/Land Use Approval Process how they have met at least 6 of the 9 goals.
- Both Option 1 and 2 would wipe out King Plaza, displacing and probably killing many small businesses that our diverse community needs.

Post it note comments on the Othello materials presented

- Change block from MLK to 43rd to Othello to Holden to 65'. Especially along Othello - frontage on park.
- Yes to density
- Yes to farmers market
- Affordable commercial space is key to retaining population
- Yes to usable open space and density instead of parking lots.
- The safety of kids and elders in tall buildings is important

Othello Option 2: Expanded Core 85' Alternative

- More setbacks with higher building
- Plaza at NW corner of Othello and MLK
- I oppose option 2. The transition from what we have now to option 2 is too much. Also, the light rail station will feel like it is in a tunnel. The community should be involved in future decisions to change zoning. Upzoning is not appropriate at this time.
- I support minimum densities on key parcels within X feet of light rail stations or key catalyst sites for public/private partnerships
- Neighbors desire for more open space should NOT be used as an excuse to change the zoning and build taller buildings
- Need an overall green framework/infrastructure for livability with large scale buildings.
- Option 2 makes MLK into a canyon.
- What purpose do the tall buildings serve?
- Who is profiting from this business?
- An 85' expanded core area guarantees problems related to increasing crime and financial viability concerns for the developers.

Othello Streetscape Concept

- Bicycle traffic is safer and cyclists are healthier when bicycle lanes are not combined with main auto routes.
- As a biker, Alternative 1 is a much safer plan and much more appealing.
- Sharrows in Alternative 2 do not feel safe. Two official bike lanes please. Also bike lanes next to parked cars is not very safe.
- I really like both the streetscape concepts. But even now (and always) people park cars along the street extensively blocking the sidewalks. Will you speak to these residents about what they will do with their cars?
- Like bike lanes on both sides
- There are 6 – 8 houses along Othello with no obvious driveways or parking spaces. Some of them may have alley parking access. They should be consulted before any changes are made. Other alternatives: Parking only on one side of the street. No parking from MLK to 45th, then keep parking to Rainier.
- I like both but weigh-in in favor of Option 1 because it is better for bikes.
- Back out parking at strip mall on corner of Rainier and Letitia is potentially deadly.

Othello General Comments

- What are the risks of higher density? There is a danger of increased crime; unoccupied units threaten developers' financial break even point – increasing need for subsidized units. Concentrating poverty is a major risk (potential for). We do not want to recreate a Greenwood Gardens.
- Greenwood Gardens', in the 70's, was a 4-story tall development, in 5 – 6 buildings, in the NW corner of MLK/Othello intersection. Due to a failing economy, the developer had to subsidize units. Originally this was proposed as a market rate rental project. The project was severely criticized. Several buildings were torn down and converted to senior housing (exists today). So the threat of this happening again is a concern.
- Similar to the concern today, e.g., Othello Partners development at Othello was originally to be all ownership. Due to the economy, this has changed, so all units are now rental. Maintaining occupancy levels is a risk, especially in financial troubled times.
- Lower density lowers risk. Best example, New Holly redevelopment is primarily lower densities and town house design. This means a family unit has greater "definable space". Fence in the yard promotes more safety. This is their space. Multi-floors, corridors, hallways, stairways are areas that are not you space, and very difficult to keep safe.
- Increasing crime was the major factor that drove Albertsons and a Fred Meyer store to leave the Rainier Valley in this decade. The QFC store in Rainier Beach pulled out. This recent loss should not be forgotten but should serve as a concern not to develop too fast. This includes making sure that infrastructure includes police (services) that can respond quickly to 911, and to be able to patrol neighbors. This includes light rail stations.