



HISTORIC ALBINA ADVISORY BOARD (HAAB)

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Date: October 10, 2023

Time: 4 PM – 5:30 PM

Location: In-person and online Zoom meeting

This document is a summary of the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Historic Albina Advisory Board workshop held in October 2023.

Historic Albina Advisory Board Members in Attendance

- Sprinavasa Brown
- Andrew Campbell
- Bryson Davis
- Cleo Davis
- Keith Edwards
- JT Flowers
- Tamara Kennedy
- Kevin Modica
- James Posey
- John Washington III

Historic Albina Advisory Board Members Not in Attendance

- Dr. Ebony Amato-Blackmon
- Leslie Goodlow
- Estelle Lavespere
- Cobi Lewis
- Dr. Carlos Richard

Staff and Presenters

- Ericka Warren, Try Excellence, HAAB Facilitator
- Dr. Steven Holt, Try Excellence, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Strategic Advisor
- Commissioner Alicia Chapman, Oregon Transportation Commission
- Assistant Director Erika McCalpine, ODOT Office of Social Equity
- Brendan Finn, Urban Mobility Strategy Director
- Megan Channell, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Director
- Caitlin Reff, Portland Bureau of Transportation
- Sharon Daleo, Portland Bureau of Transportation
- Shawnea Posey, Portland Bureau of Transportation
- Nicholas Starin, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
- Teresa Dunham, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Team, Technical Support
- Natalie Warner, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Team, Technical Support
- Logan Cullums, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Team, Notetaker

Agenda

- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program Updates
- Director's Update
- Oregon Transportation Commission Meeting Prep
- Next Steps

DBE Program Updates

Assistant Director Erika McCalpine provided an overview of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program at ODOT. She provided statistics about the differences between minority DBE and white woman owned DBE contracting in the period of 2014-2018 and 2019-2023. She noted that while the number of contracts for minority DBEs has gone down in 2019-2023 compared to 2014-2018, the total number of dollars to minority DBEs has gone up. There is a significant benefit to being part of the DBE program for minority DBEs, while there is no benefit to white woman owned DBEs.

Discussion

- A HAAB member asked for clarification on the ethnicity data, and what the abbreviations in the slides mean.
- A HAAB member asked how the numbers compare from year to year and how the DBE numbers compare to the numbers for non-DBE firms.
 - » AD Erika M. said her team would have to pull this data and could provide it at a later date.
- A participant asked for information on minority women-owned businesses.
 - » AD Erika M. clarified that she was asked specifically to look at white women compared to other minorities. She can pull data on Black women specifically and send to the HAAB.
- A HAAB member asked if ODOT has a sense of what caused the changes in the levels of white female DBEs compared to other minority DBEs – in terms of both overall dollar amounts and number of contracts.
 - » AD Erika M. said that she can ask this question of the team at ODOT. She noted that minority contractors have a very wide range in terms of the business that they do, from consulting to construction.
- A HAAB member noted that among Black-owned businesses, there is an over-representation of flagging and trucking companies, and these are the least lucrative kinds of construction contracts. The HAAB member also wondered what number of contractors were out of state. The total value of contracts to Black-owned businesses is only \$39 million which feels discouraging.
- A HAAB member asked if there has been a decline in the number of Black businesses bidding on government contracts and if there are ways to improve engagement.

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- » AD Erika M. said that yes, ODOT has programs to encourage businesses to get certified and help them through that process. She noted that ODOT doesn't always have the best reputation for contracting which makes it hard to make these connections.
 - » Megan Channell noted that the COAC was established to take a look at these barriers specific to Rose Quarter. COAC members shared those barriers openly, which helped craft the project's Subcontracting and Diversity Plan.
 - A HAAB member asked for any correlations or trends around who is doing what kind of work – for example, consulting versus construction. The HAAB member also asked for information on how past studies may have influenced current work.
 - » AD Erika M. said she could pull that data and suggested a small-group meeting to confirm data topics.
 - A participant asked if there is an intentional effort to incentivize some of the larger companies to mentor smaller companies.
 - » AD Erika M. confirmed that a mentorship program is currently in development.
 - A HAAB member emphasized the need to move the bottom line.
 - A HAAB member recommended developing a newsletter or dashboard to communicate progress on DBE contracting issues.

Project Updates

Megan Channell noted that the Reconnecting Communities grant application has officially been submitted. In last year's funding cycle, applications were due in the fall and USDOT responded late in Quarter 1 of this year. ODOT expects to hear from USDOT in Spring 2024 and will keep the HAAB posted.

Shawnea Posey confirmed that the City of Portland's applications for the Broadway corridor and 82nd Avenue have also officially been submitted.

Brendan Finn said that ODOT is in close contact with partners at Albina Vision Trust (AVT), the City and at the federal level. There is improved communication and coordination compared to last year's grant cycle.

November OTC Meeting Prep

Megan notified the HAAB that a Statewide Transportation Improvements Program (STIP) amendment will be presented to the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) on November 9. This would codify the finance plan to shift funds from Rose Quarter to the I-205 project. The money that is shifting is not new information, it is the money described in the finance plan.

Also on November 9, there will be a panel discussion potentially including HAAB members, if they so choose. ODOT was hoping to use this meeting to do some planning for the OTC meeting.

Discussion

- In addition to messages on Rose Quarter, ODOT wants to communicate the larger vision of the HAAB and the community, including work that AVT and the City are doing.
- A HAAB member asked if the DBE numbers will go before OTC or the state legislature. The HAAB member would like to see the issues elevated. They would like to see material improvements and hopes it can be elevated to decision-makers.
- A HAAB member agreed. Many of the businesses they work with don't have any information on how to contract with ODOT which is frustrating.
- A HAAB member asked if thought has been given to establishing a specific channel of communication for regular information on contracting for ODOT. This could be via newsletter, social media, etc. If there isn't current capacity at ODOT, then ODOT should consider contracting with a DBE to do this work.
- A HAAB member is concerned with the workers who are employed by contractors. They emphasized the need to think about our community and how the project can benefit people. There needs to be a concerted effort to benefit the workers and the community, not just the people who own the businesses.
- Ericka W. said that she would like to leverage the expertise of the COAC moving forward and she refocused the group on the OTC meeting topic.
- Brendan said that ODOT is in the preparation stage for the November OTC meeting. He reached out to AVT and the City of Portland to let them know the meeting is happening. The OTC wants to hear from a variety of voices and not just those at ODOT.
- A HAAB member asked if this will be a report out to the OTC or another format.
 - » Ericka W. said that this is an intentional opportunity for the HAAB to present. The HAAB has leeway here to determine what the group wants to tell the OTC. Potential topics could be funding, DBE participation, etc.
 - » Brendan said that there will be a public testimony component at the OTC meeting, but the HAAB will have a specific item on the agenda to present as a panel.
- Commissioner Chapman noted that she has not had a chance to talk with the other commissioners recently. That said, Commissioner Byer is very concerned about the inevitable ask to go to the legislature and ask for more money. In his mind, this project is a redevelopment project, not just a transportation project. We need to

show that there is a unified vision for this project and that OTC/ODOT agree on the merit for this project. The fact is that ODOT is running out of money.

- A HAAB member said that the HAAB just wants to be heard. HAAB members want to see when they have provided input that things change. This is not evident just yet. The biggest challenge is the various systemic barriers that get in the way.
- Ericka W. asked Commissioner Chapman if this community context would be helpful to share at the OTC meeting. This is an opportunity to do right by the community.
- Shawnea Posey said that we need to figure out specific ways to move forward. The project needs funding and community participation. The community needs job opportunities the project will provide. The HAAB, project team, and community partners need to sell it to the OTC. It's compelling to bring in the historic justification for more funding.
- A HAAB member said having a visual element to the presentation would be helpful to visualize what was lost and what the opportunities are. Transportation projects can be used for good, and that's the intent of this project.
- A HAAB member said that when budgets get tight, the Black community's interests get cut first and that's what we saw here.
- A HAAB member asked what Commissioner Chapman has heard from other commissioners about the project.
 - » Commissioner Chapman has heard consensus that the project needs to move forward from other commissioners. There is bipartisan support for the project because it will have economic development implications for not just the Albina community. The whole state will benefit.
- Ericka W. noted that it sounds like we need some additional time to prepare for the OTC meeting, perhaps an additional prep meeting over Zoom with a smaller group of volunteers to put this together and share out via email with the full HAAB.
 - » A HAAB member said breaking into small groups has been a challenge and the entire HAAB should be invited to participate.
 - » Ericka W. said she will work with the project team to coordinate OTC talking points and extend the invite to the full HAAB.

Next Steps

A preparation session for the OTC will be scheduled for later in October. The next HAAB work session will be on December 12.