



HISTORIC ALBINA ADVISORY BOARD (HAAB)

MEETING #28 SUMMARY

Date: September 26, 2023

Time: 4 PM – 6:15 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 meeting. The meeting [presentation](#) and [recording](#) provide additional documentation. Note: Due to technical difficulties the recording of the meeting started late.

Historic Albina Advisory Board Members in Attendance

- Dr. Ebony Amato-Blackmon
- Sprinavasa Brown
- Andrew Campbell
- Bryson Davis
- Leslie Goodlow
- Estelle Lavespere
- Kevin Modica
- James Posey
- Dr. Carlos Richard

Historic Albina Advisory Board Members Not in Attendance

- Cleo Davis
- Keith Edwards
- Tamara Kennedy
- John Washington III

Staff and Presenters

- Ericka Warren, Try Excellence, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Strategic Advisor & HAAB Facilitator
- Alicia Chapman, Oregon Transportation Commission
- Brendan Finn, Urban Mobility Strategy Director
- Megan Channell, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Director
- James McGrath, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Design Team
- Caitlin Reff, Portland Bureau of Transportation
- Amy Nagy and Lisa Abuaf, Prosper Portland
- Rachael Hoy, Portland 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

- Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review
- Public Comments
- Revised Charter Adoption
- Project Updates
- Design Updates
- Economics of Highway Covers
- Next Steps

Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Review

Ericka Warren welcomed board members and attendees to the meeting and provided an overview of the agenda. She also provided the phone numbers for public comment and technical assistance.

Ericka reminded committee members of the 7 Principles of Agreement to guide their participation in the meeting.

Ericka introduced Oregon Transportation Commissioner Alicia Chapman. James Posey asked if Commissioner Chapman could speak to her stance on the I-5 Rose Quarter project and about the current economic and social conditions in Central Portland.

- Commissioner Chapman stated that she supports the I-5 Rose Quarter project. She added that she was also disappointed that this project was delayed.
- Brendan Finn said that the conversations around economic and social conditions in Portland are happening at the highest levels of both City and State government. He offered to connect HAAB members to these conversations.
- James asked for updates on this topic at future HAAB meetings.

Revised Charter Adoption

Ericka noted that the charter is a living document, and it can be updated by the HAAB at any time. She asked for a motion to adopt the revised charter.

- Bryson Davis moved to adopt the revised charter.
- Sprinavasa Brown seconded the motion to adopt the revised charter.

With no additional discussion, HAAB members voted to adopt the revised charter.

Project Updates

Ericka invited Megan Channell to provide project updates.

Megan first provided a recap of the OTC meeting on September 14. At this meeting, an informational update was provided on the I-5 Rose Quarter project. OTC Commissioners expressed support for the project, along with a commitment to move the project forward.

OTC Chair Brown said that she would like the OTC to have more direct interactions with the HAAB. The next OTC meeting will be November 9 in Portland. Moving forward, the project team will provide the HAAB with information on upcoming meetings of interest, especially those with decision points related to the project.

Megan then briefly covered next steps for implementing the updated project timeline.

Megan thanked HAAB members for their expertise and input on ODOT's application for the federal Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) grant. ODOT's application is focused on construction dollars for the highway cover, pedestrian and bike bridge and local street improvements. ODOT will be submitting the application requesting \$850 million tomorrow, September 27.

Brendan thanked Albina Vision Trust and the City of Portland for their letters of support and cooperation on this grant application. The grant application will go before legislative committees later this week. He noted that ODOT has also received letters of support from legislative leadership and the governor.

- James said he isn't currently comfortable with the project's equity lens, as he hasn't seen any data to support it. He wants to see people of color participating in a meaningful way in the project.
- Megan responded that at the HAAB workshop on October 10, ODOT Assistant Director Erika McCalpine will present information on ODOT's DBE program, including disaggregated data.
- James agreed that this data needs to be disaggregated. He also reiterated his concerns with the impacts to the Hamilton-Sundt Joint Venture.
- Megan responded that the Joint Venture is still under contract with ODOT, and they are still in the pre-construction phase on the project.
- Ericka said that this topic is worth the focus, and AD Erika McCalpine will be able to help answer these questions on the 10th.

Caitlin Reff provided an update on PBOT's RCN grant applications for both 82nd Ave and Broadway/Weidler. The application on Broadway/Weidler complements and extends the planned investments for the I-5 Rose Quarter project. The applications were presented at Portland City Council last week and Council unanimously supported them.

Ericka asked the HAAB for any questions about the grant applications.

- James asked if local business closures factored into the City application.
- Caitlin responded that the planning team working on this application did look at the corridor as a key connector up to NE Martin Luther King Jr Blvd and Grand Ave.
- Ericka added that the HAAB's charge is to hold the I-5 Rose Quarter project accountable, and there are always additional opportunities to speak to other issues outside of this space.

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- Caitlin added that the City is always looking for ways to make public streets more welcoming and safer.
 - Kevin Modica noted that the Boys Center is also a concern. He asked about the scope of the Broadway project east of the I-5 Rose Quarter project.
 - Caitlin responded that Broadway St is recognized as a City-classified Main Street from the Portland State University campus to the Hollywood neighborhood.
 - Estelle asked if any of these proposals impact right of way or existing intergovernmental agreements. She also asked how to ensure that the HAAB is represented, given that additional interests will come into play as development moves forward.
 - Caitlin responded that with the Broadway project, there would be more engagement as the project advances toward construction. Given the overlap in geography, engagement will continue to be a topic with ODOT and the HAAB.
 - Lisa and Rachael from Prosper Portland added that they are here to take feedback from HAAB members back to decision-makers at the City.

Public Comment

One comment was submitted to the HAAB by email prior to the meeting. This comment is included as an attachment to this document. No comments were provided verbally during the meeting.

Design Updates

Ericka invited James McGrath to provide updates on the latest project design.

James noted that there are four key topics the design team would like to get the HAAB's input on over the coming months, and these will help drive the project forward. Ultimately, the design team is looking for the HAAB's recommendations for each of these focus areas:

- Pedestrian/Bike Crossing
- Ramsay/Wheeler Options
- Highway Cover
- Street Design

Discussion

- James Posey asked which topic the design team thinks should be tackled first.
- James McGrath noted that the Ramsay/Wheeler element is the recommended starting point.

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- Megan added that the highway cover process is taking longer than initially projected. This work will likely go beyond the September 2024 timeline shown in the presentation.
 - James Posey said he would like to see more information on jobs and economic development potential.
 - Lisa with Prosper Portland noted that two kinds of analysis have been considered, which are real estate financial feasibility and economic impacts. Additional types of analysis can also be undertaken.
 - Rachael with the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability added that an additional point of discussion with the HAAB should be, what is missing from the highway cover uses?
 - Kevin Modica responded that the neighborhood has undergone substantial changes over the years. It used to have local businesses that were critical to everyday life, like daycares, churches, and hardware stores. This is what's missing.
 - In the meeting chat, Andrew Campbell said that more intentional walking tours in the project area are needed. To figure out what's missing in the project area, intentional community engagement is needed, and ODOT and PBOT have a history of missing this community engagement piece in the neighborhood.
 - Community Member and AVT employee JT Flowers noted that he would like to keep the overall scope in mind, as this will result in a better outcome for Lower Albina. He also noted Albina Vision Trust is working to bring lost resources back to the neighborhood and again stressed the importance of thinking about this project in a comprehensive way.

Highway Cover Presentation

Megan introduced Auden Kaehler with WSP. Auden noted that he currently works on several of ODOT's Urban Mobility Strategy projects. He added that there is interest all around the country to build these covers and start to correct for past harms associated with highway construction.

Auden then provided a presentation on the economics of highway covers across the United States. Examples included covers in Phoenix, Dallas, Seattle, Boston and Washington, D.C.

Discussion

- Andrew Campbell asked for the closest example to the I-5 Rose Quarter project in terms of project size and budget.
- Auden responded that the downtown Seattle lid is the most similar. It has also gone through several design and land use iterations with significant public involvement.

Next Steps

Ericka thanked everyone for joining and outlined the remaining 2023 meetings.

Attachment: Public Comment

Date received	September 26, 2023
Source	Email
From	Jonathan Greenwood
Subject	HAAB Public Comment

Hello,

I do not support the expansion of I-5 in the Rose Quarter. The freeway should not be widened and a cap should be placed over it to allow dense housing and business development on top of it. I am a resident of Portland and a user of this freeway; in fact, I truly believe freeways should be removed from our city.