

# HISTORIC ALBINA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING #22 SUMMARY

Date: November 15, 2022  
Time: 4:00–5:15 PM  
Location: 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.

## Historic Albina Advisory Board Members in Attendance

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- Keith Edwards
- Dr. Carlos Richard
- Kevin Modica
- Estelle Lavespere
- Leslie Goodlow
- Sharon Gary-Smith
- John Washington
- Sprinavasa Brown
- Bryson Davis

## Historic Albina Advisory Board Members Not in Attendance

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- Andrew Campbell
- Andrew Clarke
- Keith Edwards
- Dr. Ebony Amato-Blackmon

## Staff and Presenters

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- Ericka Warren, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Historic Albina Advisory Board Facilitator
- Megan Channell, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Director
- Monica Blanchard, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Deputy Director
- Shawnea Posey, City of Portland Deputy Project Manager
- James McGrath, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Urban Design Team
- Bill Hart, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Urban Design Team
- Tiffany Swift, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Urban Design Team
- Natalie Warner, Technical Support, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Owner's Representative Team
- Logan Cullums, Notetaker, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Owner's Representative Team

## Agenda

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- Welcome, Introduction, Agenda Review
- Public Comment
- Project Updates
- Design Equity Framework
- Urban Design Update
- Next Steps, Adjourn

### Welcome, Introduction, Agenda Review

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Ericka Warren, Historic Albina Advisory Board Facilitator, welcomed board and participants, provided an overview of the meeting and reminded everyone of the phone numbers for public comment and technical assistance.

Ericka reminded committee members of the seven principles of agreement to guide their participation in today's meeting.

### Public Comment

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No written comments were provided in advance of the meeting, and no verbal public comments were received during the meeting.

### Project Updates

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Megan Channell, Project Director, provided an update on the Reconnecting Communities grant application. The project team recently applied for a \$100 million capital construction grant under this federal program. This application was developed in partnership with the City of Portland, and in close collaboration with Albina Vision Trust. The City and Albina Vision Trust also applied for a separate planning grant for the project under this same program.

Shawnea Posey, City of Portland Deputy Project Manager, introduced herself and noted that she is supporting the project's community outreach and engagement efforts moving forward. In anticipation of the project's Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA), several briefings are scheduled with City advisory committees. The Bicycle Advisory Committee was briefed last week, and the remaining briefings will be held in the next month. City staff is currently completing their technical review of the project's early work package designs.

Megan then provided an update on the SEA, which was published today. SEAs typically have a 30-day comment period. However, given the holidays and the broad interest in the project, this comment period will be 50 days long, ending on January 4, 2023. The SEA online open house is also live, and a virtual public hearing will be held on December 14, 2022. This hearing will be an opportunity to provide verbal testimony. Physical letters, emails and voicemails are also accepted, and all comment methods carry equal weight. Once the project team reviews all comments, the

SEA will be revised. The federal government will then issue a decision document, which is expected in Spring of 2023.

Megan then touched on the construction timeline. Construction on Early Work Packages A and B is scheduled to begin at the end of 2023. HSJV and ODOT brought three Disadvantaged Business Enterprises into the design process early to prepare them for construction.

Discussion:

Kevin Modica asked if the project's Early Work Packages coincide with the construction of the Interstate Bridge Replacement. He also asked if the Reconnecting Communities grant funds could be used on other projects or if they could only be used on the Rose Quarter project.

- Megan responded that if funding is awarded, it can only be used for the Rose Quarter project and that ODOT did not apply for Reconnecting Communities funding for any other project. She added that Early Work Package construction will start before the Interstate Bridge Replacement breaks ground. That project is expecting a 2025 construction start date at the earliest, so there will be some overlap in construction phases.
- Kevin added that he is concerned about the burden of construction detours, and he hopes that the project team is keeping this in mind.
- Megan responded that maintenance of traffic applies not only to cars but also bikes, pedestrians, and transit. She added that there is a sub-team on the project focused on this issue, and the project team is coordinating with other projects in the region to minimize construction impacts.

John Washington asked how much latitude the \$100 million in grant funding would provide and what percentage of the budget it would represent if awarded.

- Megan responded that the grant application was very specific about how funds could be used. If awarded, funding from this grant can only be spent on the construction of the highway cover. Based on preliminary designs, the overall cost of the project is \$1.18 - \$1.25 billion for a cover that supports 3-story buildings, and it will cost \$200 million more for the cover to support 6-story buildings.

Sharon Gary-Smith said that she was recently at Harriet Tubman Middle School, and she was overwhelmed by the pollution rising up from rush hour traffic on I-5. This experience grounded her in the need to move forward on the project. She was curious about the Biden administration's vision around equity and repairing historic harm from the construction of the interstate system. She asked whether there have been any conversations about this subject with federal partners.

- Megan responded that in its grant application, ODOT acknowledged its racist past and discussed steps the agency is taking to do business differently. ODOT knows it is impossible to recreate the community as it was, but that the agency wants this project to provide benefits to the historic Albina community. Megan added that air quality is an important issue, and the SEA does evaluate this. By addressing the bottleneck on I-5, idling is expected to reduce, which would result in slight air quality improvements.

## Design Equity Framework

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Monica Blanchard, Deputy Project Director, presented an overview of the project's Design Equity Framework (DEF), which was first shared with the HAAB in September. The DEF document is intended to provide structure and set expectations regarding equity on the project. It will become a governing document, and can be adapted and used on future ODOT projects.

Monica then touched on some of the feedback provided by HAAB members at the September Design Collaboration Forum when the DEF was discussed in detail.

Ericka noted that the DEF alone won't create restorative justice, but it is an important step to move forward.

Discussion:

- Estelle Lavespere asked if the DEF only applies to ODOT employees.
  - Monica responded that it applies to all participants in the design process, including ODOT, consultants and partner agencies.
- Sharon noted that she appreciates the intention and thoroughness behind the DEF. She said she would like to see other government agencies adopt DEFs. She also asked how the DEF will measure change in the community.
  - Monica responded that the project's performance measures are one way to measure change. The performance measures tie in with the DEF, especially regarding design implementation. Monica said she would need to think more about how to show growth among the project team.
  - Ericka added that everyone is learning together. She noted that partner agencies, community organizations and community elders can all provide guidance. Some changes will be clearly identifiable, but others will be harder to observe.
  - Sharon noted that government agencies typically have their own language and methods for measuring performance, which can hinder progress. She would like to avoid this by ensuring effective inter-agency coordination.
- Dr. Richard stated that he is concerned with accountability. He noted that accountability provides a way to course-correct if things go wrong during implementation.
  - Ericka responded that she is looking forward to diving deeper into this process with the HAAB.

## Urban Design Update

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James McGrath provided a recap of the Design Collaboration Forum held on November 8, 2022. Since the last HAAB meeting in September, the urban design team has been hard at work incorporating HAAB input into early work package designs. Not all details discussed at past meetings will be included in these design documents, but that is because some design elements will require partner implementation.

Bill Hart noted that ODOT leadership has approved a planning scope for the project's art program. The design team is drafting a detailed scope addressing content of the art, how to select artists and how these decisions will be made. The Regional Arts Council has expressed its excitement in collaborating on this project.

Tiffany Swift shared a Miro board with preliminary design drawings for the early work packages.

- Sharon Gary-Smith asked if it's too late to replace a few of the symbols with names of icons in the Oregon Black community, such as Beatrice Morrow Cannady, Dr. DeNorval Unthank, Gladys McCoy and Dr. Bill Berry.
  - James responded that it is never too late for new ideas and that this could be incorporated into historic markers on the Williams Walk, Pillars of Albina or the art that will face Harriet Tubman Middle School.

Ericka wrapped up the design discussion by encouraging HAAB members to participate in the Design Collaboration Forums as they have capacity.

## Next Steps / Adjourn

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Ericka reviewed the next steps for the project. She noted that she would send an email to HAAB members with information about how to provide feedback during the SEA public comment period.

Ericka closed out the meeting by expressing her appreciation for the HAAB members' time and investment in the project. She then adjourned the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

*Note: This meeting was hosted in an online format that enabled Historic Albina Advisory Board members to unmute their microphones and use web-cameras to participate in the meeting. Attendees, or public observers, remained in "listen-only" mode and without access to video-sharing functions (attendees were able to view the presentation slides).*