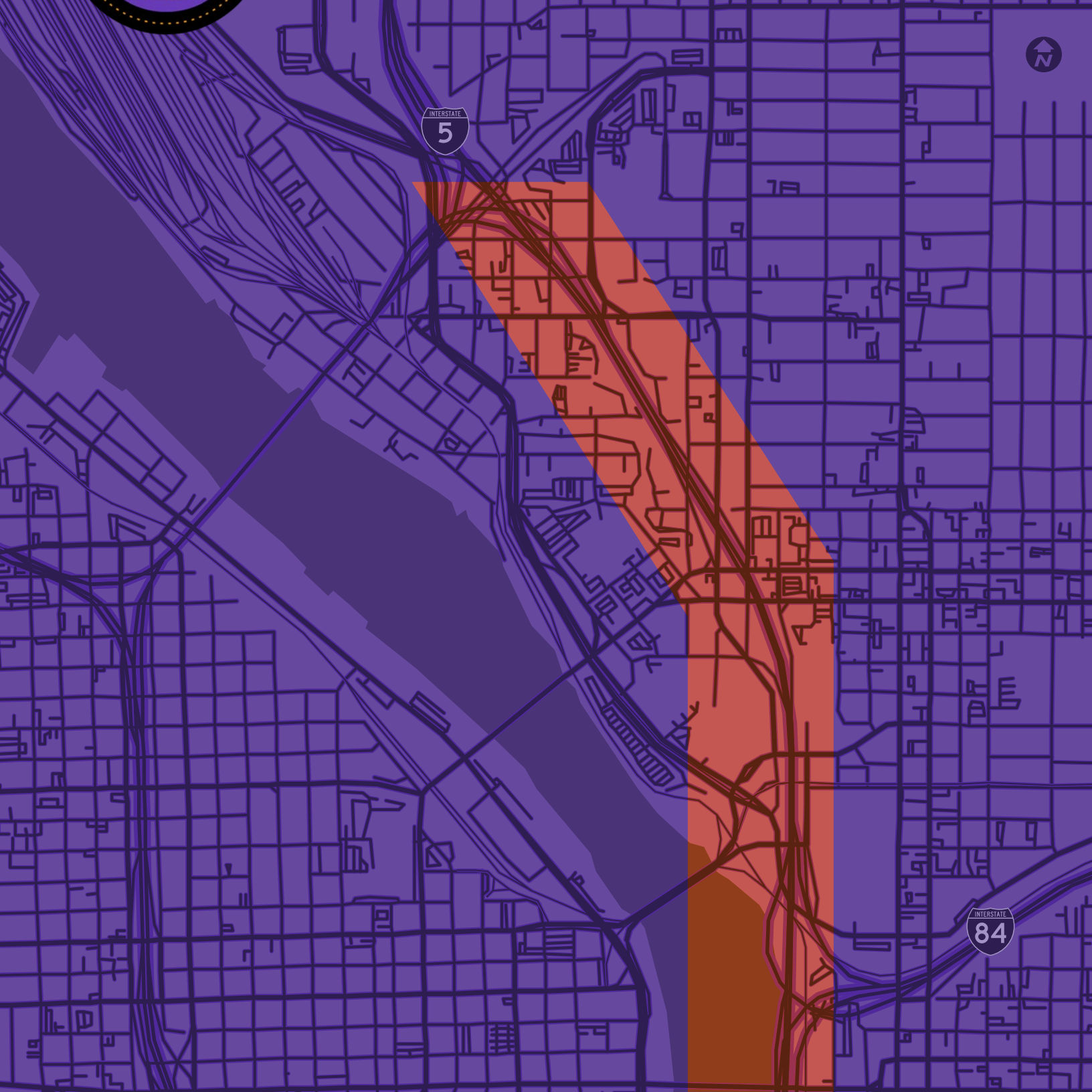




# INFRASTRUCTURE FOR REBUILDING AMERICA (INFRA) GRANT APPLICATION OUTCOME CRITERIA





# I-5 ROSE QUARTER

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## IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

**Fiscal Year 2025-2026**  
**Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA)**  
**Large Project Grant Application**

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## **OUTCOME CRITERIA**

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Submitted by:  
**Oregon Department of Transportation** (Applicant/Recipient)

Submission Date: May 6, 2024

**This project is designated as**  
**Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program Extra**  
for having received a Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Award  
Click here: [\*\*Neighborhood Access and Equity Capital Construction Grant\*\*](#)

***Note:** Adobe Acrobat is the recommended application  
to use when accessing hyperlinks within this document.*

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>ADA</b>	Americans with Disabilities Act
<b>APP</b>	Area of Persistent Poverty
<b>AVT</b>	Albina Vision Trust
<b>City</b>	City of Portland
<b>CM/GC</b>	Construction Manager/General Contractor
<b>COAC</b>	Community Oversight Advisory Committee
<b>DBE</b>	Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
<b>ESA</b>	Endangered Species Act
<b>ETC</b>	Equitable Transportation Community
<b>FHWA</b>	Federal Highway Administration
<b>FY</b>	Fiscal Year
<b>HDC</b>	Historically Disadvantaged Community
<b>INFRA</b>	Infrastructure for Rebuilding America
<b>I-5</b>	Interstate 5
<b>I-84</b>	Interstate 84
<b>I-405</b>	Interstate 405
<b>ICA</b>	Independent Cover Assessment
<b>NAE</b>	Neighborhood Access and Equity
<b>ODOT</b>	Oregon Department of Transportation
<b>RCN</b>	Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods
<b>RCP</b>	Reconnecting Communities Pilot
<b>ROW</b>	Right of Way
<b>SPIS</b>	Safety Priority Index System
<b>TAMP</b>	Transportation Access Management Plan
<b>TIF</b>	Tax Increment Financing
<b>USDOT</b>	U.S. Department of Transportation
<b>VMS</b>	Variable Message Signs





# CRITERION 1: SAFETY

## KNOWN SAFETY CHALLENGES FOR TRAVELERS WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA

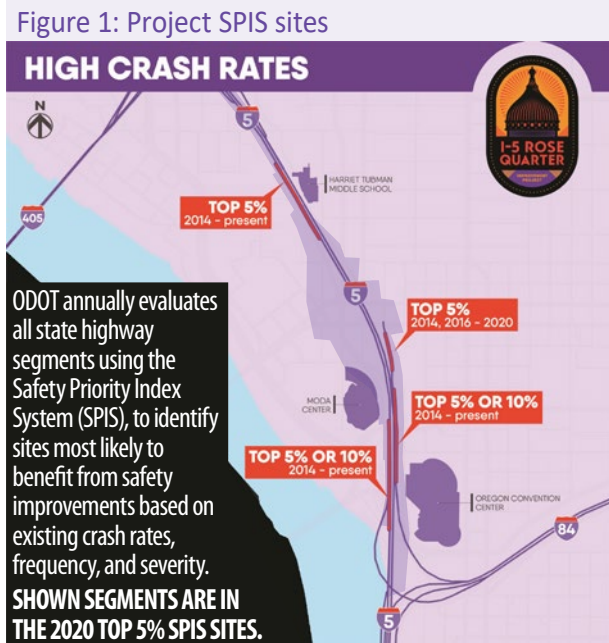
Crash data from 2011 to 2015 indicate that the crash rate for a significant portion of the mainline through the project area on Interstate 5 (I-5) between Interstate 405 (I-405) and Interstate 84 (I-84) (for all types of crashes) was approximately **3.5 times higher** than the statewide average for comparable urban interstate facilities.<sup>1</sup> In short, this segment of highway has the highest crash rate on urban interstates in Oregon. Specifically, between 2011 and 2015, there were 881 crashes on the highway and ramps in the project area.

### PROJECT SAFETY PRIORITY INDEX SYSTEM (SPIS)

Approximately 37% of the project area is categorized as a top 5% or 10% Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) SPIS site. SPIS scores are assigned to sites as a function of crash frequency, rate and severity. A higher SPIS score indicates a worse condition from a crash perspective. Figure 1 shows the locations of SPIS sites in the project area, SPIS scores, and their rank within ODOT's Region 1. The top 10% SPIS sites are most concentrated near the south end of the I-5 corridor in the project area, just south of I-405 and just north of I-84.<sup>2</sup>

### PROTECTING MOTORIZED TRAVELERS WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA

As summarized in the project's [Finding of No Significant Impact](#), the project is expected to improve safety and operations on I-5 between I-405 and I-84, in the Portland metro region, through the Broadway/Weidler interchange (the future location of the highway cover) and adjacent surface streets. The existing short weaving distances and lack of shoulders for crash/incident recovery in this segment of I-5 are physical factors that contribute to the high number of crashes and safety problems.<sup>3</sup>



Based on the project's benefit-cost analysis (BCA) results, during the 30-year analysis period from 2036-2065, building the project is expected to:

- Reduce the number of fatal crashes by 30%
- Reduce the number of anticipated injury crashes by 27%
- Reduce the number of property-damage-only crashes by 23%

**In alignment with the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Strategic Plan's safety goals,** the project includes new ramp-to-ramp connections (one new auxiliary lane in each direction on I-5 between I-84 and I-405). Auxiliary lanes are designed to separate slower vehicles entering and exiting the highway from higher-speed vehicles using the through lanes on the highway and lanes are proven to increase safety by providing drivers more time to merge, which reduces rear-end and sideswipe crashes. Additionally, wider shoulders included in the project would provide space for vehicles to move to the side of the road in the event of a breakdown or non-injury crash and can be used by emergency vehicles to access crashes or



**The project's auxiliary lanes will reduce congestion and increase safety within the Rose Quarter.**

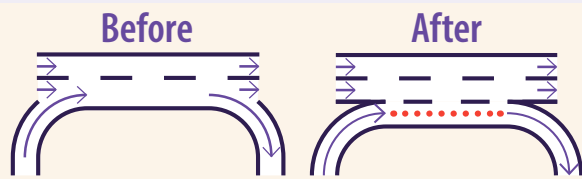
<sup>1</sup> Oregon Department of Transportation, [2015 State Highway Crash Rate Tables, 2017](#).

<sup>2</sup> Oregon Department of Transportation, [Traffic Analysis Technical Report, pg. ES-1, 2019](#).

<sup>3</sup> Oregon Department of Transportation, [Transportation Safety Technical Report, pg. 35, 2019](#).

other events, which would reduce congestion and the potential for secondary rear-end crashes related to these situations. See Figure 2 for an explanation of auxiliary lane benefits.

Figure 2: Ramp-to-ramp connections or auxiliary lanes



**What are ramp-to-ramp connections or auxiliary lanes?**

Ramp-to-ramp lanes provide a direct connection from one ramp to the next. They separate on- and off-ramp merging traffic from through traffic, and create better balance and smoother maneuverability, which improves safety and reduces congestion.

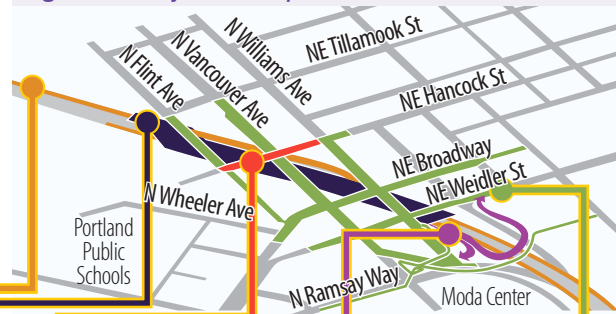
**IMPROVING MULTIMODAL SAFETY FOR TRAVELERS AND COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE PROJECT AREA**

Consistent with the actions and safety countermeasures identified in the [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#), the project is implementing strategies that support pedestrian and bicyclist safety, including **physically separated and raised bicycle facilities; shorter intersection crossings; and safer pedestrian crossings and connections, including curb ramps that comply with The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**. These facilities will encourage people to travel more freely without a car.

redesign local streets to meet current City standards and support City Policy 9.5 to “increase the share of trips made using active and low-carbon transportation modes.” The project will enhance access to high-frequency bus and light rail transit and the Portland Streetcar in the project area. See Figure 3 for an illustrative summary of the project’s safety benefits.

Further, the design for the project’s highway cover is consistent with the Central City 2035 Plan—the City of Portland’s (City’s) envisioned framework to strengthen connectivity, specifically by reconnecting neighborhoods across infrastructure and lessening the impact of highways. Located in the central city, the project will

Figure 3: Project safety benefits



I-5 RAMP-TO-RAMP LANES AND IMPROVED SHOULDERS	HIGHWAY COVER	HANCOCK CROSSING	I-5 SOUTHBOUND OFF-RAMP RELOCATION	LOCAL STREET, BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow transitions without merging into traffic and are effective in improving safety and reducing bottlenecks</li> <li>• Support improved traffic flow and will result in a safer experience with potentially less crashes</li> <li>• Provide improved access for emergency vehicles to reduce the potential for additional crashes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replaces five out-dated over-crossings with a seismically resilient highway cover to support post-earthquake recovery</li> <li>• Accommodates community development on top</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains existing N Flint overcrossing</li> <li>• Creates new Hancock St connection where there are few east-west connections today</li> <li>• Provides new safe crossing space for pedestrians and bicycles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moves the SB off-ramp south and expands buildable space on the cover for community development</li> <li>• Adds a SB flyover ramp to balance east-west traffic flow</li> <li>• Improves non-motorized travel connections</li> <li>• Reduces interactions between vehicles and pedestrians</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide safer streets with visibility, protection and access to people in the Rose Quarter area.</li> <li>• Create a new bike/ped only bridge over I-5</li> <li>• Include upgraded sidewalks and bike lanes, ADA compliant curb ramps, and street lighting</li> <li>• Address the City’s Vision Zero safety priorities to enhance safe community accessibility</li> </ul>



## CRITERION 2: STATE OF GOOD REPAIR

### ADDRESSING TRANSPORTATION VULNERABILITIES THAT THREATEN THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The project is located in Portland, Oregon and includes the largest traffic bottleneck in the state and the **28<sup>th</sup> worst bottleneck in the nation**. As the project facilitates traffic through a key node between two interstate highway system interchanges (I-5 and I-84, and I-5 and I-405) the local, regional, and national significance of this highway segment cannot be overstated: it is vital for efficient freight movement, and maintaining regional and international traffic mobility. Specific ways this project addresses transportation vulnerabilities are summarized in Figure 3 on the previous page.

### ADHERING TO USDOT AND STATE PLANS TO MAINTAIN THE PROJECT IN A STATE OF GOOD REPAIR

The project will be maintained in a state of good repair as required by the **2022 Oregon Transportation Asset Management Plan** (TAMP). Provisions of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act mandate that states develop a risk-based asset management plan. ODOT's first risk-based asset management plan was certified by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on June 28, 2019. As required by the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 23 515.13(b)(2), every year following the certification of the 2019 TAMP, ODOT has demonstrated through current and verifiable documentation that ODOT is using the investment strategies in its asset management plan to make progress toward achieving targets for asset condition and performance of the National Highway System in accordance with realizing national goals identified in 23 U.S.C. 150(b). Development of the TAMP draws heavily upon a series of policy, project and financial plans and condition reports, all of which include considerations of asset management. See *Project Requirements* for more.

### PRIORITIZING THE PROJECT'S STATE OF GOOD REPAIR TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC GROWTH AND COMMERCE

The project's mainline improvements—including the auxiliary lanes and shoulders, the highway cover, and additional reconnecting and multimodal elements presented in this application will be maintained in a state of good repair based on prioritized investment by the state. Building and maintaining the project improves freight efficiency, reduces traffic congestion and creates the foundation to build long-term transportation careers and foster economic opportunity. The **Oregon Transportation Plan** outlines an investment strategy that prioritizes maintenance and preservation of critical assets, key corridors and critical lifeline routes. The project's transportation improvements fall within the top and second tier investment strategies shown in Figure 4.<sup>4</sup>

Figure 4: State transportation investment strategies

#### Top Tier- Strategies Addressed by Rose Quarter Project

- ✓ Address fatalities and serious injuries.
- ✓ Maintain and preserve critical assets, key corridors, and critical lifeline routes.
- ✓ Preserve current public transportation service levels and maintain a state of good repair for vehicles and facilities.

#### Second Tier- Strategies Addressed by Rose Quarter Project

- ✓ Address contributing factors and reduce the severity of crashes and safety incidents.
- ✓ Maintain the broader transportation system and assets.
- ✓ Complete the active transportation network.
- ✓ Improve the efficiency, frequency, and reliability of public transportation services.
- ✓ Improve the efficiency and capacity of existing transportation infrastructure and facilities through operational improvements, exclusive of adding new through lanes, for the movement of people and goods.

<sup>4</sup> ODOT, **Oregon Transportation Plan** (p. 92).



# CRITERION 3: ECONOMIC IMPACTS, FREIGHT MOVEMENT, AND JOB CREATION

## FREIGHT MOVEMENT

### EXPERIENCING FREIGHT AND TRAFFIC BOTTLENECKS THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT AREA

I-5 within the project area experiences some of the highest traffic volumes (121,400 average annual daily trips) and hours of congestion (12 hours per day) in Oregon. Travel reliability has decreased as periods of congestion have increased from morning and afternoon peak periods to longer periods throughout the day.

The project area segment of I-5 experiences 12 hours of congestion each day, and is the state's worst truck freight bottleneck and the nation's **28th worst truck freight bottleneck** (as of 2024), negatively affecting the regional and statewide economy.<sup>5</sup>

### IMPROVING FREIGHT EFFICIENCY AND REDUCING CONGESTION BY MITIGATING BOTTLENECKS

The project is expected to result in enhanced traffic operations, more uniform lane speeds, and a reduction in lane changes compared to not building the project. In addition, the project would improve traffic operations at both I-5 southbound and northbound off-ramps by reducing ramp queue lengths and providing increased ramp storage, which would reduce the potential for queues extending onto the I-5 mainline.

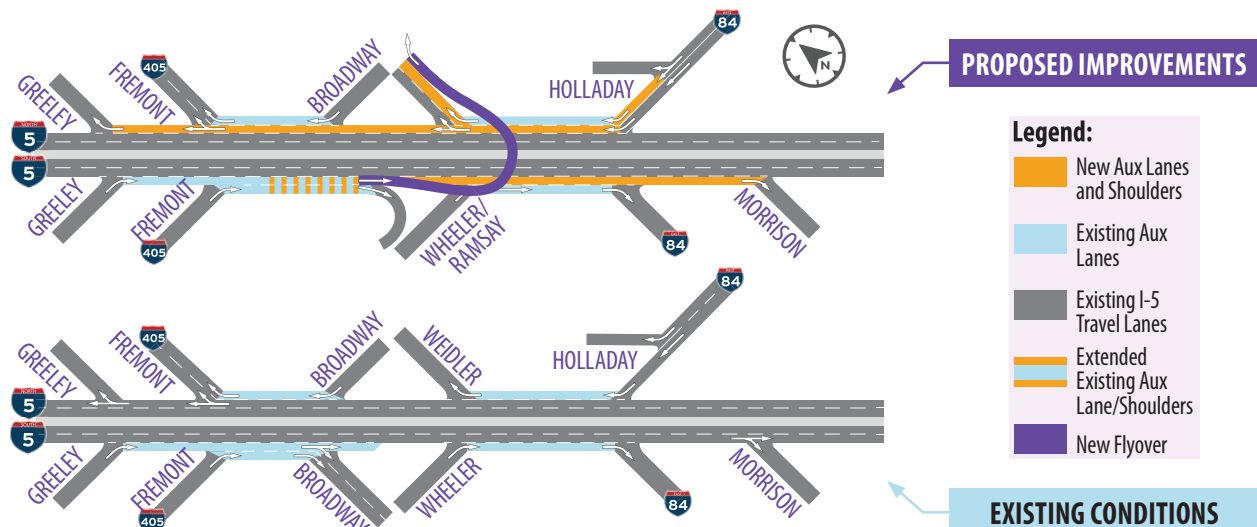
During AM and PM peak travel hours on I-5 through the project area, the project is expected to improve lane-by-lane speeds compared to no-build conditions without the project. Table 1 quantifies the estimated benefits of the project's proposed auxiliary lanes and shoulder improvements, which are represented in Figure 5.

Table 1: Estimated travel time and cost savings with proposed mainline improvements

Time Savings (Annual)		Cost Savings (value of travel time saved [VTTS])	
Source	In-person hours (Opening Year)	Opening Year VTTS (2022 \$)	30-year Forecasting Period (2022 \$)
System Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 383,500 auto passenger hours*</li> <li>• 10,900 truck hours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Auto passengers: \$7,516,000</li> <li>• Truck drivers: \$364,600</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Auto passengers: \$236,654,000</li> <li>• Truck drivers: \$11,478,500</li> </ul>

\*Time saved by vehicles multiplied by estimated occupancy

Figure 5: Proposed shoulder and auxiliary lane improvements and existing mainline conditions



<sup>5</sup> American Transportation Research Institute, [Top 100 Truck Bottleneck—2024—TruckingResearch.org](https://www.truckingresearch.org/).



## JOB CREATION

### CREATING ACCESS TO INCLUSIVE, FAMILY-WAGE JOBS AND DEVELOPING A HIGH-QUALITY WORKFORCE

Together, ODOT and the project's Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) are mutually benefiting from the CM/GC delivery model by engaging the CM/GC early during design. This early engagement has given the project team an advantage in developing a diverse workforce that has productive connections to the Albina community. Through the project's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) and Workforce Program, ODOT and the CM/GC have defined a clear pathway to economic empowerment and prosperity for a local, diverse and Black workforce. The project presents a substantial opportunity to train, develop and empower Black and previously marginalized community members for long-term careers that not only result from, and continue throughout the duration of the project, but also extend beyond—to opportunities in the larger Portland metro region.

### CREATING JOBS THROUGH DBE OPPORTUNITIES THAT FOSTER ECONOMIC GROWTH

In alignment with [USDOT'S FY2022-26 Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives](#), the project is removing barriers to wealth creation for the Albina community—the community that was divided by construction of I-5 through the project area—by creating pathways to transportation careers and economic opportunity through the project's [DBE and Workforce Program](#). To support achieving the project's DBE goal of 18% to 22%, the CM/GC

#### DBE AND WORKFORCE PROGRAM

The project provides a variety of workforce strategies (see Figure 6 on the next page). Key to the success of the DBE and Workforce Program is having a full-time CM/GC workforce advocate who has ties to the Albina community. The advocate is responsible for recruiting, supporting and

#### PLANNING FOR DBE SUCCESS

**The project estimates generating 2 million labor hours for project construction to create DBE contracting opportunities.**

#### Increasing DBE contractor capacity and capability

ODOT and the CM/GC are committed to hiring three to five "mini-CM/GCs" (small DBE construction firms that will receive mentoring to take their next step up as prime contractors); these have an estimated total contracting value of \$95 million.

#### Providing technical assistance to support long-term business success

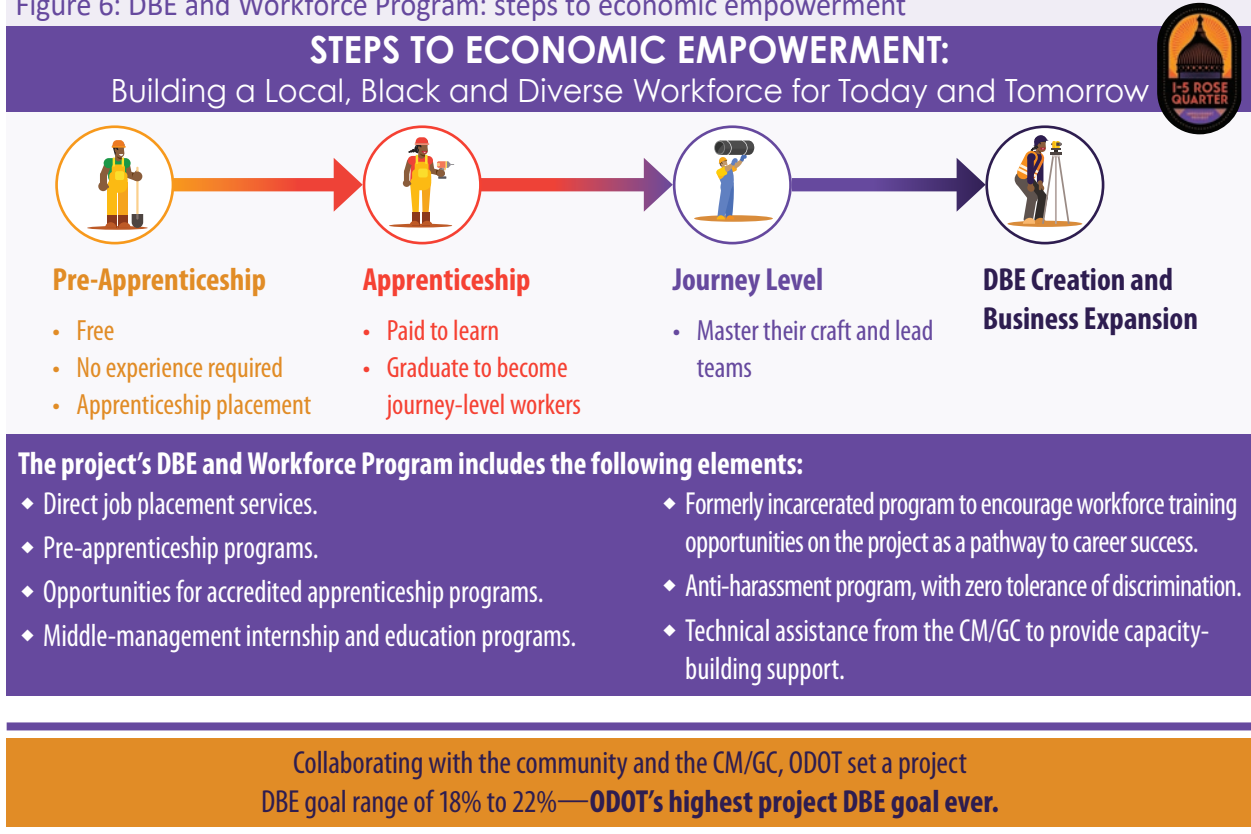
The CM/GC will coordinate or directly provide technical assistance, including in the following areas that DBE subcontractors most often cite as needed:

- DBE certification
- Business operations
- Financial management
- Staff development
- Use of new technologies

for the project evaluated all project work types and assessed current and potential DBE capacity. The CM/GC is working with existing DBEs to help them learn about the project and advertise bid opportunities. In turn, those DBE firms are coordinating with other small, minority- and women-owned subcontractors to assist them in pursuing their DBE certification.

promoting long-term retention for women and people of color on the project. The workforce advocate helps employees develop construction careers through consistent employment; skill development; and a work environment free from hate, discrimination and privilege.

Figure 6: DBE and Workforce Program: steps to economic empowerment



Click on the following video links to **hear, in their own words, how members of our project team have already benefited from the project's steps to economic empowerment.** In conjunction with other federal grant funds, any awarded funds from the INFRA Large grant program will support the project's efforts to realize generational economic empowerment for the Albina community.



**SUCCESS STORIES:  
BUILDING A NETWORK  
FOR WOMEN TO THRIVE**



**SUCCESS STORIES:  
HARD WORK, A PATH AWAY  
FROM A HARD LIFE**



**SUCCESS STORIES: BRIDGING THE  
GAP TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES,  
ONE LIFE AT A TIME**



**click here to  
watch the video**

**Laura Ramirez, Workforce Advocate**



**click here to  
watch the video**

**Turon White, Foreman**



**click here to  
watch the video**

**Terrence Hayes, Workforce Advocate**



## CRITERION 4: CLIMATE CHANGE, RESILIENCE, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

### MITIGATING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ON THE COMMUNITY

The project addresses potential adverse human health and environmental impacts through its design and construction approach, and it follows ODOT’s Urban Mobility Strategy, which encourages the use of electric vehicles, public transit, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The project’s design supports the effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by providing community reconnection features that promote walking, biking and rolling. The project also supports the [Oregon Climate Action Plan](#)—ODOT’s five-year plan to address the impacts of climate change and extreme weather on the transportation system in Oregon.

This criterion discussion has been developed in accordance with USDOT materials including, but not limited to:

- DOT Navigator Climate Checklist
- Greenhouse Gas Analysis Resources and Tools
- U.S. National Blueprint for Transportation Decarbonization
- FY2022-26 Strategic Plan

### IMPROVING AIR QUALITY AND REDUCING EMISSIONS

There are multiple project features and technologies that are expected to contribute to improved air quality within the project area: one technology is travel advisories. According to FHWA, “travel advisories can contribute to reduced emissions by modifying driver behavior” and smoothing traffic flow.<sup>6</sup> By using FHWA’s Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) toolkit, the project’s travel advisory technology is expected to reduce emissions within the project area as shown in Table 2. The project’s environmental studies demonstrate that overall greenhouse gas emissions are expected to be lower in building the project compared to not building the project.

Table 2: Emissions reductions resulting from travel advisories using the CMAQ toolkit<sup>7</sup>

	Northbound	Southbound	Pollutant Totals (kg/day)	Northbound	Southbound
Project Evaluation Year	2029	2029	Carbon Monoxide (CO)	15.583	48.596
Travel Advisory Active	Peak Hours	Peak Hours	Nitrogen Oxides (NOX)	2.645	8.259
Average Time of Active Travel Advisory	12.5 hours/day	12.5 hours/day	Particulate Matter <2.5 µm (PM2.5)	0.088	0.271
Typical Peak/Non-Peak Traffic Conditions before Travel Advisory Implementation	2,532 vehicles/hr 37 miles/hr	3,032 vehicles/hr 35 miles/hr	Particulate Matter <10 µm (PM10)	0.124	0.376
Corridor Length of Travel Advisory	1.3 miles	3.3 miles	Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)	0.130	0.401
Heavy Duty Vehicle Traffic Percentage	8.5%	8.5%	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO2e)	1,058.723	3,331.395
Optional Default Adjustment	Default	Default	Total Energy Consumption (MMBTU)	14.015	44.179

### REDUCING NOISE IMPACTS

The project includes sound walls that support environmental impact mitigation by reducing adjacent noise pollution and may include aesthetic treatments that reflect the community’s history, culture and values. **The highway cover will provide additional shielding, thus substantially reducing noise impacts by 12 decibels.**

Figure 7: Conceptual sound wall rendering



The community artwork shown in this rendering is based on a mural of Wiley Griffon in Eugene, Oregon created by artist Ila Rose. Image credit: Sam Alig of MZLA.

<sup>6</sup> Oregon Department of Transportation, Revised Climate Change Supplemental Technical Report (draft August 2023)

<sup>7</sup> FHWA, [CMAQ Emissions Calculator Toolkit](#)

## MITIGATING CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

ODOT will monitor construction to implement the abatement measures in the *ODOT Standard Specifications for Construction*. The project is also planning to recycle as many construction materials as possible to reduce the need for extraction and production of new materials. Up to 50% of construction materials are expected to be sourced locally to reduce the carbon footprint associated with greenhouse gas emissions.

## AVOIDING IMPACTS TO WATER QUALITY

The project avoids adverse environmental impacts to water quality by improving stormwater management. In short, the project will provide stormwater treatment for 156% of the ODOT contributing surface area (i.e., the project will treat stormwater from the impervious area added with the project plus existing impervious area that is currently not treated).<sup>8</sup> The project includes “water quality facilities designed to meet current regulatory requirements and would treat or use off-site treatment credits to mitigate stormwater impacts from approximately 35 acres of impervious area not currently treated for water quality. As a result of updated stormwater treatment that would occur, the project’s contribution to beneficial cumulative effects is considered large.”<sup>9</sup>

The treated stormwater would be discharged to the Willamette River, which is known to contain Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed fish. ESA-listed species would benefit from the improved water quality of the stormwater discharge, which would be treated in compliance with the Federal-Aid Highway Program Agreement. This improved stormwater treatment would result in a long-term, direct benefit to the quality of water in the Willamette River that runs through Portland.

Further, potential impacts to water quality during construction will be avoided by requiring contractors to follow standard best management and erosion control practices in the

2019 ODOT *Erosion Control Manual*, 2021 ODOT *Standard Specifications*, 2018 ODOT *Boilerplate Special Provisions*, City of Portland *Title 10 Erosion and Sediment Control Regulations*, 2022 City of Portland *Erosion and Sediment Control Manual*, and City of Portland stormwater requirements.<sup>10</sup>

## IMPROVING SEISMIC RESILIENCY

The project is located within the influence zone of the Cascadia Subduction Zone in Portland, Oregon. Additionally, the local terrain of Portland is steep and has many small fault lines. The Cascadia quake is an ongoing concern, and substantial public resources have been and will continue to be expended to prepare for this predicted megaquake.

ODOT has an unambiguous design philosophy regarding anticipated seismic events: design all new bridges for full seismic loading. The project design incorporates seismic retrofits to existing bridges in strategic locations along I-5 through the project area. All new bridges constructed by the project will be designed to meet current earthquake resiliency design codes, and the highway cover will be equipped with fire, life and safety features. The project's seismically resilient highway cover structure will replace five individual bridges built in the early 1960s that are not seismically resilient.

The project's additional structures, including retaining walls and sound walls, also will be designed to new seismic standards. Existing bridges within the project's footprint will be seismically upgraded to meet new standards. Phase 1 seismic upgrades will be installed on the remaining structures that are not replaced or widened.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Oregon Department of Transportation, **Revised Supplemental Environmental Assessment**, 2024, p. 121.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid (p. 130) | <sup>10</sup> Ibid (p. 122) | <sup>11</sup> ODOT Bridge Design Manual – section 1.17.1. **AASHTO Guide Specifications for LRFD Seismic Bridge Design Manual**





# CRITERION 5: EQUITY, MULTIMODAL OPTIONS, AND QUALITY OF LIFE

## EQUITY AND BARRIERS TO OPPORTUNITY

### BARRIERS TO ACCESS FOR THE ALBINA COMMUNITY

During the 1940s and well into the 1950s, the heart of Albina was a commercial, institutional and social spine for the community. The neighborhood consisted of small-scale streets, and walkable community services were distributed throughout. Beginning in the late 1940s and continuing into the early 1970s, a series of public infrastructure projects displaced several hundred<sup>12</sup> residents, many of whom were Black and low-income residents. In the 1960s, during the national Eisenhower Interstate System era, ODOT built I-5 directly through Albina and adjacent neighborhoods, creating a decimating grade separation in Albina and destroying hundreds of homes within a community of color. The neighborhood that exists today does not foster the spirit or meet the needs of the community that was divided when those projects were constructed.

Figure 8: Albina and the project area in the 1950s and 1960s: before and after construction of I-5

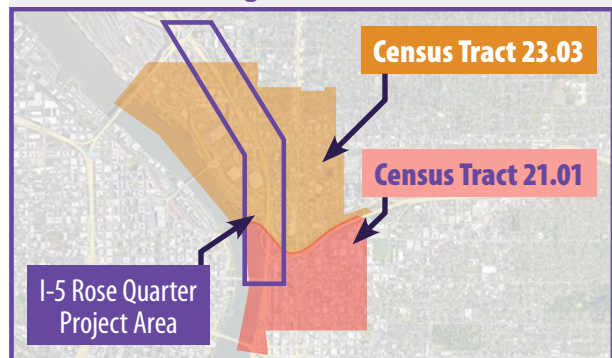


### ANALYSIS OF HARMFUL POLICIES AND THEIR IMPACT TO HISTORIC ALBINA

According to USDOT's List of Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP) and Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC), the project's two main census tracts (21.01 and 23.03, see Figure 9) are designated as APP and HDC.<sup>13</sup> Using USDOT's Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer, the project's census tracts 21.01 and 23.03 within the project area are identified as being disadvantaged and having an area of persistent poverty (APP) (see Table 3 on next page). These two tracts are above the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile disadvantage (nationally) threshold for:<sup>14</sup>

- Annualized Disaster Losses (76<sup>th</sup> percentile)
- Impervious Surfaces (99<sup>th</sup> percentile)
- Diesel Particulate Matter Level (100<sup>th</sup> percentile)
- Air Toxics Cancer Risk (78<sup>th</sup> percentile)
- Hazardous Sites Proximity (87<sup>th</sup> percentile)
- Toxics Release Sites Proximity (91<sup>st</sup> percentile)
- High-volume Road Proximity (83<sup>rd</sup> percentile)
- Railway Proximity (93<sup>rd</sup> percentile)
- Unemployment (76<sup>th</sup> percentile)
- House Tenure (99<sup>th</sup> percentile)
- Housing Cost Burden (83<sup>rd</sup> percentile)
- Disability (88<sup>th</sup> percentile)
- Transportation Safety (75<sup>th</sup> percentile)

Figure 9: Census tracts within the project area that are designated HDC and APP



**The bulleted data above highlights the importance of the project in supporting the federal government's Justice40 Initiative by providing equity-centered investment to the Albina community.**

<sup>12</sup> Portland State University in Association with Emanuel Displaced Persons Association 2 (EDPA2), 2021, Reclamation Towards the Futurity of Central Albina: Dreamworld Urbanism, p. 30, 32, 37, 38

<sup>13</sup> USDOT [List of Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities](#), June 6, 2023 <sup>14</sup> USDOT [ETC Explorer - State Results](#), April 2024



Table 3: Project area census tracts with HDC, APP or other transportation disadvantages

	Census Tract 21.01	Census Tract 23.03
USDOT HDC	✓	✓
USDOT APP	✓	✓
ETC Explorer Disadvantaged Census Tract	✓	✓
Climate and Disaster Risk Burden (ETC)	✓	✓
Environmental Burden (ETC)	✓	✓
Social Vulnerability (ETC)	✓	✓



## ACHIEVING EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

The project provides a substantial opportunity for ODOT to realize statewide equity goals in ways that will have lasting benefits for the Albina community and for all demographics across Oregon, especially previously displaced and marginalized people. Through the project’s environmental assessment process, the project team has defined solutions

that distribute benefits generated by the project to users of all modes and abilities. The project conducted an independent assessment of the highway cover design that included the community’s design recommendations to actively implement an equitable approach for realizing desired community outcomes in the space on top of the highway cover.

### This list highlights project benefits.

- **Building a highway cover to maximize developable space**, restore the local street grid over I-5, and minimize the highway’s noise and pollution effects.
- **Building a pedestrian-and-bicycle-only bridge** over I-5, improving conditions for people of all abilities walking, biking, rolling or taking transit.
- **Relocating an I-5 southbound off-ramp** to reroute traffic in the project area, making walking, biking and rolling safer and reducing car and transit delays.
- **Building a diverse workforce**, supported by equitable operations and policies, and establishing an informed culture that delivers authentic inclusivity.
- **Promoting economic opportunity for the Albina community** and others who have been historically marginalized or are currently marginalized.

## MITIGATING ECONOMIC DISPLACEMENT OF RESIDENCES AND BUSINESSES

**ODOT is intentional about not repeating past harms to Albina, especially harms through displacement. Displacement effects from the project include no impacts to residential homes or apartments** and are limited to only a handful of relocatable commercial retail or service-related businesses.

For Right-of-Way (ROW) acquisition, ODOT is following the Uniform Relocation Act, which provides measures to minimize the hardships of relocation for the occupants, including providing advisory services to support their successful relocation.

**275** Number of residential homes destroyed with the opening of I-5 through Albina in 1962.

**0** Number of residential homes to be displaced with construction of the project.

## PUBLIC INVESTMENT TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The project will create significant new developable land on top of the highway cover. This will support the City of Portland's (City's) place-based strategies to leverage newly reconnected local streets, and take advantage of financing options and the community development programs described below.

The City's N/NE Neighborhood Housing Strategy (formed by the Portland Housing Bureau and supported by the City Council) is using Tax Increment Financing (TIF) resources to accomplish four key objectives around housing affordability and stability, specifically for the people most impacted by the City's action: (1) creating new homeowners, (2) creating new rental units, (3) preventing further displacement and (4) land banking. Each of these objectives aligns with the [project's values](#).

**7.58** Acres of new and remnant developable land created with construction of the highway cover (4.11 acres on cover and 3.47 acres off cover).

In a parallel effort to the City's N/NE Neighborhood Housing Strategy, the N/NE Action Plan Leadership Committee, a committee formed by Prosper Portland (which is the economic development arm of the City), is using TIF resources to accomplish its five objectives for the N/NE community, including Albina: (1) Lowering the Barriers to Funding, (2) Supporting Small Business Ownership and Growth, (3) Establishing Affordable Commercial Space, (4) Creating a Cultural Business Hub and (5) Providing Technical Assistance. Through the value capture of TIF, legacy homeowners will continue to receive assistance; the preservation and expansion of affordable housing will happen naturally; chances that displacement will no longer occur are increased; and wealth building for the community becomes possible.

**1,176,000** Gross square feet of new development capacity created with construction of the highway cover.

## A HIGHWAY COVER THAT REDRESSES PAST BARRIERS TO OPPORTUNITY

In constructing the project, ODOT is positioned to build a highway cover and additional community reconnection features to address damage to the historic Albina community that resulted from displacement due to the original construction of the highway and other public projects. Constructing the highway cover provides the foundation for space to be developed by the community and for the community that supports economic opportunities and improved connections to the waterfront and surrounding neighborhoods (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Existing condition of proposed highway cover area (L); conceptual rendering of future developable space on top of the highway cover (R)



## NATIONAL AWARD RECOGNITION

The project was awarded a 2024 FHWA Environmental Excellence Award. This award recognizes ODOT and project partners' **exemplary achievement** in Community Considerations in Transportation Improvements. FHWA recognizes the commitment to community input and regional collaboration. Input from the HAAB, AVT and youth-centered organizations ensures that the project design reflects community interest and expectations.

## EQUITY-FOCUSED POLICIES THAT PROMOTE HIRING AND RETENTION OF UNDERREPRESENTED POPULATIONS

Through the project's DBE and Workforce Program, ODOT and the CM/GC have defined a clear pathway to economic empowerment and prosperity for a local, diverse and Black workforce. The project presents a substantial opportunity to train, develop and empower Black and previously marginalized community members for long-term careers. For more information on the project's DBE and Workforce Program, see Criterion 3.

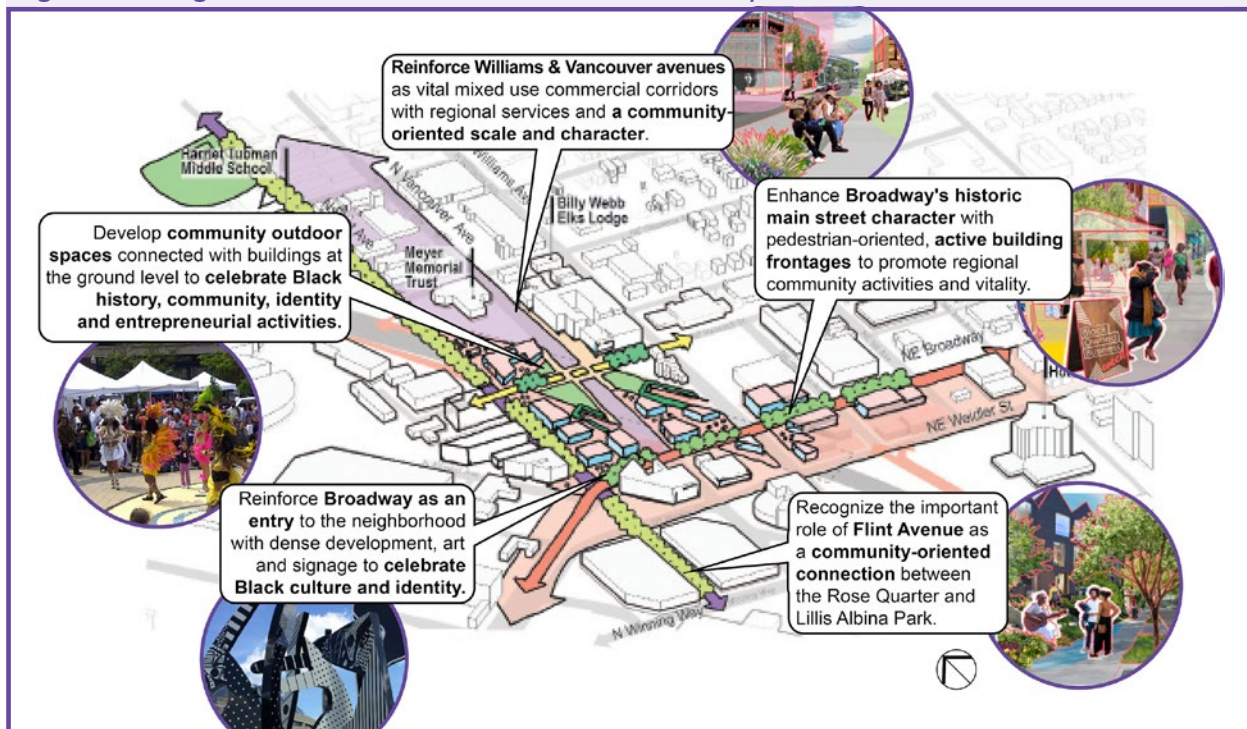
In alignment with [USDOT's FY2022-26 equity objectives and strategies](#) to reduce barriers to family wage jobs and wealth creation, the project's [Diversity and Subcontracting Plan](#) includes several guiding principles to maximize economic opportunities at all levels of the project for underrepresented local populations.

### MULTIMODAL OPTIONS AND QUALITY OF LIFE

#### ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY AND DIVERSE PEOPLE TO INFORM THE PROJECT'S DESIGN

To inform a project design that reflects community-desired outcomes, ODOT conducted an independent highway cover assessment (ICA) as directed by the Oregon Transportation Commission to study highway cover design options that promote the redevelopment of the Albina community in a manner that creates economic opportunities for area residents and minority-owned businesses. The ICA process expanded dialogue with communities of color to understand their desired outcomes within the project area which include **community wealth, community health and community cohesion**. The independent consultant team and the community identified specific economic and community-focused opportunities to **maximize high-quality development parcels, restore the local street grid and provide flexibility for future development** (see Figure 11). In ODOT's ongoing effort to actively engage the community in informing the project's design, ODOT regularly meets with the project's Historic Albina Advisory Board (HAAB) – the 14-member project committee consisting of Black community leaders and those with ties to historic Albina.

Figure 11: Neighborhood framework—desired community outcomes





## PROJECT PARTNERSHIPS THAT SUPPORT A REGIONAL EQUITABLE VISION

The project is one part of a broader community-based vision to honor Lower Albina’s past by transforming 94 acres of underutilized property in the central city into a socially and economically inclusive community that will connect seamlessly to the river and surrounding neighborhoods. The City, in partnership with Albina Vision Trust (AVT)—a nonprofit organization that links private interests and public priorities with community values for the Albina community, was awarded an FY 2022 Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program community planning grant to advance this work (see Figure 12).

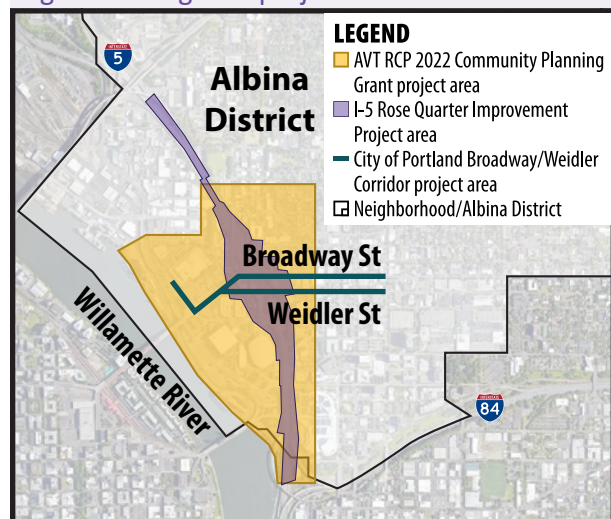
To further invest in the Albina neighborhood, both ODOT and the City received FY 2023 capital construction awards under the NAE program. To realize the regional vision to reconnect Albina and advance the [project’s core values](#), ODOT can use its NAE award to fund the initial investment to construct the core of the highway cover. **Building the highway cover is an essential first step to actualizing the community’s vision and improving the transportation network in partnership with the City.** Both ODOT’s and the City’s NAE awards will be used to invest in constructing multimodal and reconnection improvements within the project area including along the Broadway/Weidler corridor.

### ALBINA VISION TRUST

AVT is a pivotal project community partner organization created to counter the intentional displacement of Black people from the neighborhood due to urban renewal, freeway siting and long-term gentrification. AVT’s business and charitable purpose is to counteract anti-Black racism in the urban form and to build a diverse, multigenerational, affordable community. Since its inception in 2015, AVT has engaged thousands of Portlanders to envision and work towards a reimagined Albina community.

The project is a critical element of AVT’s broader community redevelopment vision to connect the Albina community over I-5 to the Willamette River. In July 2022, AVT formally supported the Portland City Council’s unanimous approval of its intergovernmental

Figure 12: Regional projects to reconnect Albina



agreement with ODOT to advance the community-informed and current highway cover design. In coordination with AVT and the Albina community, ODOT looks forward to ensuring that the design and construction of the highway cover will meet community aspirations for a reconnected Albina.

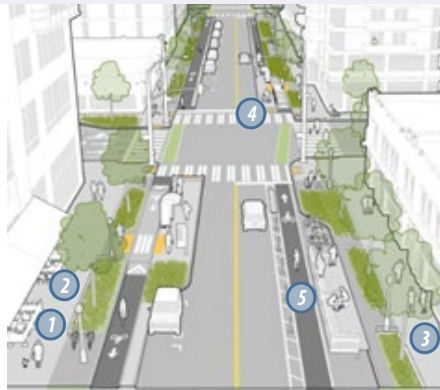
## TRANSPORTATION CHOICES THAT CREATE THRIVING COMMUNITIES AND INCREASE ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES

The community-informed design for the highway cover provides opportunities to **maximize high-quality development parcels, restore the local street grid, provide flexibility for future development, and minimize the highway’s noise and air pollution effects.** These opportunities create the potential for the area to revert to a **thriving, reconnected community that has better access to daily destinations and essential services such as workplaces, healthcare providers, grocery stores, schools, places of worship, recreational facilities and parks.** The project’s additional multimodal and street improvements (see Figure 13 on the next page) will also improve the usability for those walking, biking, rolling and accessing transit.

A new pedestrian and bicycle bridge that is part of the project’s design refinements will allow users of all ages and abilities to safely cross over I-5 to daily destinations. As part of the regional effort to realize

these project investments, the City received an FY 2023 NAE Program Capital Construction Grant for the Broadway/Weidler corridor that focuses on local street enhancements and improved street connections directly surrounding the project area within the Albina community.

Figure 13: Conceptual streetscape with pedestrian and bicycle facilities



- ① Wide sidewalks with through pedestrian zone
- ② Furnishing zone
- ③ Frontage zone
- ④ Closely spaced pedestrian crossings
- ⑤ Separated bicycle facilities

Long-term direct and indirect effects include improved bicyclist safety from upgraded, physically separated and raised bicycle facilities; shorter intersection crossings; and safer pedestrian crossings and connections. These facilities will encourage people to travel more freely without a car (see Figure 14).

Figure 14: Multimodal street network in the project area



68,000 SF  
Estimated new or widened sidewalk

77,000 SF  
Estimated new or enhanced bike lanes



## CRITERION 6: INNOVATION AREAS, TECHNOLOGY, PROJECT DELIVERY, AND FINANCING

### INNOVATIVE PROJECT TECHNOLOGY

#### A HIGHWAY COVER THAT RECONNECTS THE COMMUNITY AND PROVIDES MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

The project's design includes a **single seismically resilient highway cover** (see Figure 15) that replaces five individual bridges, creating the opportunity to maximize developable space for the community above the highway. ODOT, in partnership with the City, the HAAB, AVT, and the community, collaborated to achieve a highway cover design that reconnects the community and provides opportunity for new and modern bicycle facilities, pedestrian paths and transit stops, creating more access to multimodal transportation options.

Figure 15: Conceptual rendering of the project's highway cover



This graphic is for illustrative purposes only and does not represent a final design. The City, in partnership with ODOT, will lead the highway cover land use and development process, guided by strong community involvement.



## TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY

There are several innovative technologies and Intelligent Transportation System devices planned in and around the highway cover portion of the project. Cameras with automatic incident detection are being evaluated for use on the project; these would reduce safety risks by detecting incidents and safety-related issues such as stopped vehicles, pedestrians and wrong way drivers and by providing early fire detection. When an incident is detected, the cameras will automatically alert ODOT traffic management staff who can diagnose the incident and determine the proper response.

The highway cover design includes automatic fire alarm and detection systems as part of the project's Fire Life Safety technology. In addition to the cameras discussed above, the project is evaluating linear heat detection technology. The project's Fire Life Safety System includes a fiber optic cable detection mechanism that can identify a fire condition within a few feet and produce a precise protection response.

The project also includes Variable Message Signs (VMS) in the region that provide alerts and alternate route recommendations supporting improved traffic flow. Some VMS would be used for incidents in and around the tunnel underneath the highway cover and would be installed at key decision points for drivers to select an alternate route. Other VMS under consideration would be used to notify drivers of upcoming event traffic patterns ahead, allowing drivers to actively adjust to route changes.

## INNOVATIVE PROJECT DELIVERY

**FHWA's Center for Innovative Finance Support** recognizes the CM/GC model as an *innovative project delivery* method. ODOT competitively selected a CM/GC team in 2020 to help deliver the project. During the design phase, ODOT is gaining CM/GC benefits from early contractor input such as optimizing schedule, providing constructability input, defining earlier price certainty, identifying innovations and value engineering ideas and managing risk, to name a few benefits. During

construction, ODOT expects to gain the additional benefits of a more streamlined construction process tailored to the contractor's means and methods and shaped by contractor over-the-shoulder design input. ODOT further expects to collaboratively address issues with the contractor during construction to optimize schedule, manage risk, minimize impacts to businesses and the community, limit rework and avoid or minimize change orders or claims. See Table 4 for project specific examples of how ODOT is maximizing the project's CM/GC delivery model.

**Table 4: Potential opportunities for savings on construction cost or schedule**

Revised retaining wall designs	✓
Contaminated soil disposal within ODOT ROW	✓
Precast deck panels	✓
Cement treated base to replace rock stabilization	✓
Reduction in median shoulder width	✓

**In April 2024, ODOT, City of Portland and the Albina Vision Trust hosted the USDOT's Acting Undersecretary for Transportation Policy, Christopher Coes, and Director of the Departmental Office of Civil Rights, Irene Marion, to celebrate the awarded RCN funding for two northeast Portland infrastructure projects.**



Pictured left to right: HAAB member Kevin Modica, USDOT Acting Undersecretary for Transportation Policy Christopher Coes, ODOT Director Kris Stickler, Albina Vision Trust Executive Director Winta Johannes, Director of the Departmental Office of Civil Rights Irene Marion and Albina Vision Trust Director of Strategic Communications and Government Relations JT Flowers