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## HISTORIC ALBINA ADVISORY BOARD (HAAB)

### MEETING #29 SUMMARY

Date: January 23, 2024

Time: 4:00 PM – 6:00 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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- Dr. Ebony Amato-Blackmon
- Sprinavasa Brown
- Andrew Campbell
- Bryson Davis
- Keith Edwards
- Leslie Goodlow
- Cobi Lewis
- Estelle Love-Lavespere
- Kevin Modica
- James Posey
- John Washington III

### Historic Albina Advisory Board Members Not in Attendance

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- Cleo Davis
- Dr. Carlos Richard
- JT Flowers

### Staff and Presenters

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- Ericka Warren, Try Excellence, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Strategic Advisor & HAAB Facilitator
- Megan Channell, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Director
- James McGrath, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Design Team
- Dr. Steven Holt, Try Excellence, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Strategic Advisor
- Caitlin Reff, Portland Bureau of Transportation
- Amy Nagy, Prosper Portland
- Lisa Abuaf, Prosper Portland
- Rachael Hoy, Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
- Patricia Diefenderfer, City of Portland
- Nicholas Starin, City of Portland
- Tiffany Swift, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Design Team
- Natalie Warner, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Team, Technical Support

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- Teresa Dunham, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Team, Technical Support
  - Isabelle Kennedy, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Team, Technical Support
  - Benjamin Fleming, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Team, Notetaker

## Agenda

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- Welcome / Introductions / Agenda Review
- Public Comment
- Precedents & Possibilities
- We Heard You: Project Updates & What's Upcoming
- Next Steps

## Welcome / Introductions / Agenda Review

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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 mentioned that HAAB members will have access to physical copies of the HAAB material binders. They were delayed because of the recent ice and snow but the resources are available online and she will coordinate to get HAAB members physical copies.

Ericka shared the Mentimeter tool to engage HAAB members. This is a tool to gain live feedback from meeting attendees. She conducted a test with an icebreaker question and mentioned they will use it later in the meeting and in future meetings to gain feedback from attendees.

## Project Updates

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Ericka invited Project Director Megan Channell to provide project updates.

Megan mentioned her project update is a little different today. Updates will focus on important aspects of highway cover design – how the cover will be built, structural considerations for the cover, what the cover can support, and how the cover will meet community values.

Megan provided a recap of items discussed in the October and December HAAB Work Sessions:

- October:
  - » ODOT Assistant Director Erika McCalpine presented data on ODOT's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program.
  - » Updated the HAAB on the Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant application that was submitted to US DOT in September.

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- » Heard HAAB's feedback in preparation for Community Panel Presentation that was made at the November 9<sup>th</sup> OTC meeting. Megan thanked Mr. Modica and HAAB members for attending and representing the HAAB at the OTC meeting.
  - December:
    - » Focused on initial information related to the highway cover structural design.
    - » Revisited the community priorities from the Independent Cover Assessment process with interest from HAAB members to continue to build on and enhance those priorities.
    - » Provided an overview of highway cover capacity, noting areas of the cover that are more suited for larger development opportunities versus lower intensity of uses.
    - » Shared cover offset information.

Megan acknowledged questions from the HAAB that were related to cover governance and economic analyses, intersections with the city's broader planning work, requests for additional information on the structural design, air quality, and the right of way process. Answering those questions is a focus of today's meeting and the team will continue to provide highway cover design information as well as additional background on design assumptions.

## **Public Comment**

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Joe Cortright provided a verbal comment. He characterized the project as being in danger of failing and pointed to ODOT reallocating funding to I-205 and making the project too expensive. He also said that ODOT has repeatedly violated the Open Meetings Law because work sessions held in October and December 2023 were not noticed for the public. Ericka noted that meeting notes could be found on the project website and that if Mr. Cortright wanted to share additional comments in writing, they would be provided to the HAAB as they had been in the past.

## **Precedents & Possibilities**

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Ericka invited James McGrath of the Design Team and City of Portland staff to talk about Precedents & Possibilities for the cover.

James began the conversation by explaining that the purpose of the discussion is not to make a decision about what goes on the cover. The goal is to look at nation-wide examples of building projects, which could provide ideas for possible developments on the cover that would fulfill the draft community priorities of community cohesion, public health, and wealth creation.

The precedents discussed are a series of projects locally and nationally that are about creating Black space and championing community values and priorities. There are more precedents available in the HAAB materials binder, which is also available online.

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- Rachel Hoy of the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability presented the Sherman Phoenix Marketplace:
    - » Located in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
    - » Recruited neighborhood residents to directly invest in building this project and become owners to advance community wealth. Opened in 2018 and is Black owned and operated.
  - James McGrath presented Destination Crenshaw:
    - » Outdoor museum with one hundred different commissioned art pieces by Black Los Angeles artists.
    - » Unapologetically Black space in the heart of LA.
    - » Example of how we could tell the arc of the story of the Black experience in Oregon and in Albina.
  - Nicholas Starin of the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability presented Stony Island Arts Bank + Rebuild Foundation:
    - » Three story, 20,000 square foot building on a 30,000 square foot site on the south side of Chicago. It is a repurposed adaptive reuse building that's been transformed into a hybrid space that houses contemporary and arts materials and archival activities.
    - » Shows how a small building and site, and one that could easily fit on or near the RQ cover, can have important programs and projects that are part of a larger collection of complimentary activities.
  - Amy Nagy of Prosper Portland presented Vanport Square:
    - » Vanport Square is a unique wealth building opportunity on MLK in Northeast Portland.
    - » Example of wealth building through ownership. Opportunity to combine both business ownership with small property ownership.
    - » Through New Market tax credits, it enabled the business owners to purchase the spaces by providing affordable loans.
  - Tiffany Swift of the Design Team presented Portland Community College's (PCC) Opportunity Center:
    - » Located in Cully Northeast Portland and opened in the fall of 2023.
    - » Local example of the community wealth and community health programs that have shown up on the draft priority list. The Center's mission is to transform lives through education and connections to family wage jobs.

James McGrath showed two iterations of how the Precedents & Possibilities project examples could physically sit on RQ cover parcels to demonstrate the scale of the examples compared to the scale of the cover.

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## Discussion

- Cobi Lewis asked if we are asking community members what they might want? How do we take these and narrow it down?
- Megan Channell responded we have time to define the uses on top. The City as the land use authority will be leading the community process to determine the kind of future development that will eventually go on top of the highway cover.
- Rachel Hoy responded that these examples help us think about the cover itself and adjacent parcels and what can physically be accommodated.
- Patricia Diefenderfer of the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability said with these precedents, we want to demonstrate and provide a visual of tangible examples so that HAAB members and community at large can start to see what is actually feasible from a physical layout perspective on the sites.
- Keith Edwards said there should be a variety of buildings and connectivity to the area that facilitates and highlights Albina's identity and history.
- James Posey asked what wealth capacity is built into these projects? Is any money going to be made and how does that fit into the plan to build wealth in the community?
- Amy Nagy of Prosper Portland responded that ECONorthwest will help with the economic analysis portion of the project. They are going to be looking at the criteria for prioritizing not only the sites that are available on and off cover, but also thinking about what those development scenarios are, and what it takes to make those financially feasible.

## Mentimeter Question

Ericka again initiated the Mentimeter tool to gauge HAAB members' interest in the five precedents projects that were shared. Members were asked to rank the five examples in order of passion / priority for them.

- John Washington said he gets uncomfortable when he is feeling "led" and mentioned that he and the community have ideas of their own. He asked if he needed to pick one of the projects presented.
- Ericka Warren clarified that the Mentimeter exercise is just to learn how to use the engagement tool and that no one was being asked to pick project to be included on the proposed RQ cover.

## We Heard You: Project Updates & What's Upcoming

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Megan Channel thanked the HAAB for their questions. Megan noted on the topic of Financial Resources, one factor that is outside of the project team's control is that we

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have to be especially mindful of the Oregon Constitutional requirement for state highway dollars to be used solely for the purpose of transportation.

- John Washington asked if the process of development on the covers is going to be the traditional process that the City does with Prosper being in control of the development.
- Amy Nagy said the answer is no. The plan is to show what types of development are possible on the parcels that are available. There is not a plan right now for Prosper Portland to take control of the parcels.
- James Posey added that Joe Cortright's testimony made good points and asked ODOT to address his comments so there is a clear understanding of his objections.
- Ericka Warren acknowledged James Posey's question.

John Wolf of the Design Team answered questions raised at December's work session related to technical considerations and discussions about highway cover capacity and highway cover offsets that might influence building placements. These girders were selected because they are economical, efficient for construction, involve low maintenance cost, and feature high strength-to-depth ratios. John also talked about physical and topographic constraints of the project and explored what it would take to increase capacity and girder size. The freeway and local street profile would need to be further modified to accommodate larger girders.

- Kevin Modica had multiple questions for John Wolf. He asked if the project's funding is limited to what is allowed for highway construction, whether that takes into consideration future light rail or fast rail alignment, and if that would be a way to get the increased capacity. He also asked John to expand on girder type in relation to a seismic event.

John Wolf also provided responses to questions that that came up during the last conversation in December related to tunnel ventilation and air quality around the highway cover.

- Tunnel Ventilation:
  - » Because of requirements for Fire and Life Safety related to incident response or a fire within the tunnel, there will be ventilation and active fans within the cover itself to respond to that type of incident.
  - » Vertical ventilation is not anticipated because the tunnel will not be long enough.
- Air Quality:
  - » John responded to an article shared by JT Flowers following the December work session that spoke about potential adverse effects to air quality from a highway cover in Colorado.
  - » It is accepted that the closer to a freeway you are, the higher levels of particulates and pollutants will be. The further away you are from a freeway, those levels go down.

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- » The project is already looking to implement best management practices related to air quality and creating buffers around the freeway where possible. Best practices include looking at vegetative screening, walls, or other methods to create a buffer and deflect influence from the freeway pollutants.
  - Sprinavasa Brown asked for a future HAAB meeting focused on public health. She requested more data and information on what is being done to mitigate air quality.
  - Ericka Warren mentioned that the design team is working on this and that work can be shared as it is available.
  - James McGrath agreed and added that it is a multipronged effort. There are natural materials and more structural and mechanical improvements that can help with air quality.

Megan Channel gave an update regarding right of way process or property acquisition. We are still in the potential identification phase.

- Leslie Goodlow responded that she is still concerned about purchasing the land needed around the project and whether prices would increase based on knowledge of the project. She also shared concerns about property owners getting cheated and continuous cost escalation and would like this to be a regular update at future meetings.
- Megan mentioned she will keep providing updates on Right of Way and property acquisition in future meetings.

## Next Steps

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Megan gave an update on upcoming meetings – February and March meetings will be combined into one longer March meeting. February's meeting will be cancelled. HAAB members and invited guests will be sent a survey to confirm their preferences on the timing of the meeting.

Ericka Warren thanked everyone for coming and adjourned at 5:52 p.m.