

# HISTORIC ALBINA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING #17 SUMMARY

Date: March 15, 2022

Time: 4:00–6:00 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 of this meeting.

## Historic Albina Advisory Board Members in Attendance

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- Leslie Goodlow
- Sharon Gary-Smith
- Andrew Campbell
- Estelle Lavespere
- Dr. Carlos Richard
- John Washington
- Sprinavasa Brown
- Bryson Davis

## Historic Albina Advisory Board Members Not in Attendance

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- Carl Talton
- Kevin Modica
- Keith Edwards
- Dr. Ebony Amato-Blackmon

## Staff Members and Presenters

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- Ericka Warren, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Historic Albina Advisory Board Facilitator
- Dr. Steven Holt, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Advisor
- James McGrath, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Design Team
- Marianne Zarkin, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Design Team
- Bill Hart, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Design Team
- Tiffany Swift, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Design Team
- Megan Channell, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Director
- Monica Blanchard, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Deputy Director
- Tia Williams, Urban Mobility Office Communications Director
- Natalie Warner, Technical Support, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Owner's Representative Team

## Agenda

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- Welcome, Introduction, Agenda Review
- Public Comment
- Project Updates
  - Survey Update
  - Director's Update
- Greenroads and Performance Measures Update
- Design Updates
- Next Steps / Adjourn

## Welcome, Introduction, Agenda Review

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Ericka Warren, Historic Albina Advisory Board Facilitator, welcomed board members and participants, provided an overview of the meeting and reminded everyone of the 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 public comments were received.

## Project Updates

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Shane Whittington, ODOT Program Manager for the Office of Social Equity, provided an overview of ODOT's work surveying Oregonians to determine priorities for directing funding from the federal Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). As ODOT moved through this process, they realized not everyone had enough time to respond. Shane apologized and confirmed that the IIJA online open house is live through March 21 at 6 PM, and a recent Oregon Transportation Commission meeting focused on IIJA funding was recorded and available online [here](#).

Ericka thanked Shane for attending to ensure HAAB members had an opportunity to engage with him.

- Sharon Gary-Smith said she appreciates recognizing intention and acknowledging when things fall short. She was concerned about the IIJA survey process and seeing that BIPOC communities were missed. She asked if Shane has thoughts about how to better involve these communities and if it's too early to consider what has been learned from this experience.
  - Sharon added that beyond this moment, she is wondering how there is going to be a shift given the recent misses that mirror previous outcomes that didn't cover BIPOC, poor and marginalized communities. There is an ODOT history of all of this. She asked if there's plans that have benchmarks and consequences for failure that will make demonstrative change in engagement, allocation of resources, etc.

- Shane responded that ODOT wants to ensure input is received from historically and currently marginalized communities. Not everyone uses technology, and ODOT is trying to ensure they seek feedback in as many ways as possible. This has been a continuous learning process for ODOT, and they want to make sure they are addressing long-term needs and building relationships. Shane added that Sharon directly influenced ODOT's decision to extend the IIJA survey comment period.

Ericka turned it over to Megan Channell, Rose Quarter Project Director.

Megan provided an update on the intergovernmental agreement with the City of Portland, which will re-engage the City on the project and go in front of City Council later this spring.

Tia Williams, Communications Director for the Urban Mobility Office, provided an overview of the Urban Mobility Strategy and broader investments that ODOT is making in the Portland region. She indicated she would like to connect back with the HAAB on how the UMO can facilitate coordination between the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project and the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program.

Megan followed up on project funding, saying lengthening and strengthening the highway cover adds cost, which was reported to OTC. Megan noted that depending on interest rates, the amount of currently-programmed funding for the project is between \$500 million and \$700 million. ODOT is looking to IIJA and federal grants to close the gap in funding, and the project team is continuing to prepare the broader finance plan.

Ericka asked the Board if they had questions for Tia and Megan.

## **DISCUSSION**

Dr. Richard asked Tia what equity lens is being used across all UMO projects and if there's an economic equity lens applied to tolling.

- Tia responded the UMO is currently working to standardize this across their projects. From a workforce perspective, Rose Quarter is an example of how things are starting differently with the CM/GC approach. For I-205 tolling, the team is looking at a pilot project of hiring by zip code. There's an opportunity for the HAAB to be involved with helping IBR. As far as tolling, EMAC is putting together a low-income toll report with recommendations for how to avoid further burdens to low-income drivers. This will also be a consideration for the Regional Mobility Pricing Project.
- Dr. Richard asked how many non-ODOT folks regularly attend these meetings.
- Tia responded EMAC is a community-based committee that is staffed by ODOT. She is hearing a theme where there could be more crossover between the different community committees and is happy to help facilitate this.

Bryson asked if there are estimates for the square footage difference between the 3-story buildings and 6-story buildings and is curious about the difference in potential usable space.

- Megan responded this will be determined later with the process led by the City of Portland in partnership with the community.

Sharon asked if ODOT has considered presenting the case for recompense as well as why this project has the best benefit to the African American community in Lower Albina. The desired outcome is reclaiming what was lost through displacement. Hundreds of Black residents lost their

homes in this neighborhood. Sharon added this is a different framing than what she has seen from ODOT so far.

- Megan responded that ODOT is trying to think about this as an investment in people, and an investment in place. The project's subcontracting plan is one direct way this project can invest in individual people. To the broader point, this story of harm and loss is definitely one that ODOT needs to acknowledge. ODOT can tell that story, but it can be more impactful when it comes from the community directly.
  - Ericka confirmed what she heard from Sharon is that it's important for ODOT and those in power to specifically frame funding requests for this project in terms of reconciling past harms.
  - Dr. Richard added this gets back to early HAAB meetings. There has to be a restorative justice component to the narrative. The harm and damage must be recognized before moving forward.
  - Sharon noted there are many community businesses, entrepreneurs and mom-and-pop enterprises that could be brought into this project.
  - Sharon emphasized that the community has been telling this same story, over and over. Beyond the listening, what evidence exists, and how will it be evident that the community was heard, and decisions were influenced?
- Estelle relayed she feels like ODOT wants to "stamp Black faces" on their ask for funds but feels like they've been sidelined from some crucial discussions in the past several months. If the City decides what goes on the cover, how can they be sure the City won't fall back into the same harmful patterns? How can the HAAB be re-introduced into these discussions?
  - Megan appreciated Estelle bringing that up and looks forward to when the City is re-engaged and can hear from the HAAB directly at these meetings. ODOT is incorporating recommendations from the HAAB into the IGA with the City. The HAAB's recommendations will influence what will go on top of the highway cover.
  - Tia added that whatever is put in a future letter should be authentic to the HAAB's priorities. ODOT doesn't intend to tell the HAAB, "This is what we need you to say."

Ericka added that Board members can always communicate directly with her or with project staff. She then turned the meeting over to Monica.

## **Greenroads and Performance Measures Update**

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Monica acknowledged the Environmental Assessment technical work is ongoing and the convening partners need to be engaged to provide input. She provided an overview of Climate and Health Performance Measure #2, which is aimed at achieving Bronze-level Greenroads certification.

- Sprinavasa Brown asked if the project could instead pursue Silver certification, since the recommended credits only fall short of that by 3 credits.
  - Monica said she had that question too; there are some specific requirements that aren't applicable to this urban project, like habitat restoration.

- Sprinavasa responded she would like to see more information about which credits have been identified as not attainable.
- Monica indicated she would pass that information to Ericka, who could share it with the Board members.
- Sharon said it was an interesting presentation and loves what Sprinavasa recommended. It's the difference between "what I might do" and "what I can work to do."
- Dr. Richard, Estelle, Sharon, Leslie, Andrew and Bryson all expressed support for Sprinavasa's recommendation to pursue Silver Greenroads certification. Sharon noted that enough HAAB members are present to have a quorum.

The HAAB formally recommended pursuing Silver Greenroads certification instead of Bronze.

- Monica thanked the Board and said it will be reflected in the performance measures. She then provided an overview of the remaining Climate and Health performance measures.

Ericka turned the presentation over to James McGrath to continue the design discussion from February's meeting.

## Design Updates

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James said the goal with design discussions is to ensure there are no surprises. Since last time, the design team talked to builders about some of the Board's ideas. Nothing was out of the realm of possibility. James asked if those who attended the design collaboration forum had any reflections.

Bryson said a lot of it is abstract in terms of figuring out what is possible and thinks everyone's been doing a great job so far.

James reminded the Board there are four areas where the design team would like to focus investment – Russell, Tubman Middle School, the proposed highway cover and the Rose Quarter Transit Center. These areas are where the most people will be on the ground. James confirmed that at February's meeting, the Board wanted elements of continuity throughout the project area, with elements of distinction in these four areas.

- Sharon commented she likes the four areas of engagement.
- Sprinavasa commented she likes the elements of continuity.

Tiffany, Bill and James used the Miro board to facilitate a discussion around column medallions. Bill said that in February, the design team heard a desire for culturally significant symbols to be incorporated into the design of the medallions. He asked if there are other symbols HAAB members would like to incorporate, other than the Sankofa bird and jazz history.

- Sprinavasa said she is a fan of both the Sankofa bird and the jazz symbols representing the music culture in Historic Albina and feels the design team is on the right track.
- Estelle likes the designs based in the history of Albina, like the jazz and Hill Block dome, and wants to see the design elements centered on Black Portland history.
  - Sprinavasa agreed with centering themes related to Black Portland History on the column medallions .

- Ericka confirmed she's heard on more than one occasion the opportunity to provide design feedback to the broader community should be extended.
- Sharon said representation is important to her and in favor of the Black Portland Historic examples.
- Estelle didn't know how this would be incorporated, but there were several beauty shops in the area historically and would love to see that represented.
  - Ericka responded that maybe commerce could be a design theme, knowing the area was rich with Black-owned businesses.
  - Sharon commented she loves the connection to economic development, entrepreneurship, business ownership, educational leaders, etc.

James agreed it was good feedback and the design team can create some new options and take them to the community for greater engagement.

Tiffany provided an update on recent work around crash barriers. The design team looked at both cultural and geometric patterns. Bill said from a construction perspective, it's important the pattern is continuous, but that custom patterns are possible.

Ericka asked if HAAB members prefer either geometric or culturally specific patterns.

- Bryson, Dr. Richard, Estelle, Sharon and Leslie prefer the culturally specific patterns.
- Sprinavasa commented she prefers geometric patterns but is open to supporting the majority.

Tiffany and James provided an overview of potential column treatments, which include patterned concrete and colorful tile.

- Sprinavasa expressed a preference for Pattern 4 as shown on the Miro board.
- Estelle asked if tile would be costly to maintain.
- Sprinavasa said she likes the mixed media of tile with a cultural pattern and asked if tile would fade more than patterned concrete.

James responded to Estelle and Sprinavasa that tile is resistant to staining and is not costly to maintain. He thanked the Board for their feedback and turned it over to Ericka.

Ericka added that for those who have the capacity to participate, the Design Collaboration Forums offer great opportunities for dialogue.

## Next Steps / Adjourn

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Ericka reviewed the next steps on the project and thanked the presenters and attendees for their time and adjourned the meeting at 6:02 pm.

*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. Public observers remained in "listen-only" mode and without access to video-sharing functions (attendees were able to view the presentation slides).*