

HISTORIC ALBINA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING #20 SUMMARY

Date: June 21, 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.

Historic Albina Advisory Board Members in Attendance

- Keith Edwards
- Andrew Campbell
- Estelle Lavespere
- Dr. Carlos Richard
- Sharon Gary-Smith
- Andrew Clarke
- Dr. Ebony Amato-Blackmon
- Leslie Goodlow
- John Washington
- Sprinavasa Brown
- Bryson Davis

Historic Albina Advisory Board Members Not in Attendance

- Kevin Modica
- Carl Talton

Staff and Presenters

- Ericka Warren, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Historic Albina Advisory Board Facilitator
- Dr. Steven Holt, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Advisor
- Megan Channell, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Director
- James McGrath, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Urban Design Team
- Tiffany Swift, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Urban Design Team
- Bill Hart, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Urban Design Team
- Marianne Zarkin, 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

- Welcome, Introduction, Agenda Review
- Public Comment
- Project Updates
- IGA Letter of Support
- Spring Design Survey Results
- Design Team Update
- Next Steps, Adjourn

Welcome, Introduction, Agenda Review

Ericka Warren, Historic Albina Advisory Board Facilitator, welcomed the 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

Four written comments and one voicemail comment were provided in advance of the meeting. One public comment was received during the meeting.

- Sharon Nasset asked the HAAB and project team to consider an additional alternative during the environmental assessment update process. This alternative would add an on and off ramp from the south.

Project Updates

Megan Channell, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Director, shared project updates.

Megan first provided a recap of this past weekend's Juneteenth engagement. Project staff were at the Juneteenth festival with a booth and shared information about the project with the community. Megan thanked the HAAB for their leadership and guidance on how to engage with the community.

Megan then shared an update on the Federal Delegation letter. This letter is in anticipation of the project seeking funding from the federal infrastructure bill. It would be incredibly impactful if the HAAB could provide a letter of support, distinct from the inter-governmental agreement (IGA) letter of support addressed to Portland City Council.

Megan then provided an update on the inter-governmental agreement between ODOT and the City of Portland, which is an important step toward re-engaging the city on the project. The IGA will go before City Council tomorrow, June 22, and a vote is expected within a week.

Megan also noted that a statistically significant public poll is currently underway in the Portland metro area. It's conducted annually, and results are expected in July. This public poll is separate and distinct from the urban design survey.

Megan then provided a schedule update. The project team is currently updating technical reports for the updated environmental assessment, and the public comment period will take place this fall. The project team is also progressing preliminary designs, with a current focus on the Early Work Packages (EWPs). Megan noted that the Holladay Bridge was previously part of EWP C, and it is now part of EWP B. This packaging is logical from a cost and constructability perspective.

Megan closed with a Community Oversight Advisory Committee (COAC) update. Their most recent meeting was in May, and the group had a robust conversation with the Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) around implementing the Diversity and Subcontracting Plan. Because the COAC was set up to be an oversight committee with a construction focus, they are scaling back their meeting frequency and changing to a quarterly basis, with the next meeting in September. As construction begins, the COAC will ramp back up to holding more frequent meetings.

Discussion:

Sharon Gary-Smith noted that several comments were provided to HAAB members in advance of today's meeting. She asked what more should both ODOT and HAAB members be considering to fulfill their obligations to the community?

- Megan responded that it is ODOT's responsibility to tell the truth and provide all the data and information to the community. With the city re-engaging, there will be an opportunity to better show how the highway cover fits in with the landscape of Lower Albina, and the HAAB will be a part of this process.
- Ericka added that the project has a community engagement and communications team that is actively looking at how to best provide information on the benefits of the project. The CM/GC is also working on how to best provide information on jobs and workforce benefits.

Inter-Governmental Agreement Letter of Support

Ericka noted that this is a final opportunity to discuss and modify the HAAB letter of support for the IGA before taking a vote. She then opened the floor for questions and discussion.

Discussion:

Estelle Lavespere asked if there's a way to make the language a bit stronger relating to the HAAB's involvement.

- Ericka said she is open to that, although there is a short window to make this change. She added that there is also an opportunity for testimony at tomorrow's council meeting, and the deadline to sign up is at 8:30 AM tomorrow.
- Sprinavasa Brown said she likes Estelle's idea. She asked Estelle to put her new proposed sentence in the meeting chat, so the HAAB can make a motion on that specific language.

Dr. Carlos Richard noted that the last paragraph of the letter references the city providing “significant investments.” He asked about the specifics of those investments and whether the HAAB will have input into those what those investments could or should be.

- Ericka responded that she doesn’t yet know the specifics. She added that this is another place where individual testimony could be useful.
- Dr. Richard said that his questions may be a little early, but this is something to keep in the forefront as the project moves forward, as budgets can change.

Keith Edwards asked if all HAAB members’ names will be included on the letter.

- Ericka responded that the letter will include all HAAB members’ names.

Ericka asked if a HAAB member would move to submit this letter for consideration to City Council.

- Sharon asked to include Estelle’s proposed language in the letter.
- Estelle’s recommendation was to incorporate the language “commitment to HAAB representation on a community-based governing entity for the programming of what will be on the proposed Hybrid 3 highway cover” and noted that she took the language straight from the IGA.
- Ericka said she also saw a suggestion in the chat from Dr. Richard to add “a strong” before the word commitment to the language in the second paragraph.

Ericka noted that those two adjustments to the second paragraph from Estelle and Dr. Richard have been made. She asked if a HAAB member would move to submit this adjusted letter for consideration to City Council.

Sharon Gary-Smith moved the HAAB finalize and submit the IGA support letter with the two amendments.

Ericka asked if there is any additional discussion. Hearing none, she called on each HAAB member individually to provide their vote. The HAAB unanimously voted to submit the adjusted letter to City Council at City Council’s June 22 meeting.

Spring Design Survey Results

James McGrath reminded the HAAB members they have been provided a report summarizing results from this spring’s design survey. Today’s discussion will be focused on the design team’s interpretations of the survey results.

For the medallions, respondents expressed a clear preference for the options featuring the Hilltop Block dome symbol designed by PDX Black Excellence. James proposed that the medallions use the Hilltop Block dome symbol with a simplified color palette.

Ericka asked if there are any questions about the medallion recommendation from the urban design team. Hearing none, James moved forward with a discussion of the column collars.

Survey respondents expressed a preference to bring color into what can otherwise be a drab environment under the highway. Black respondents expressed a clear preference for the second colorful tile option. All survey respondents expressed a clear preference that the column collars

be consistent throughout the project area. As discussed at the last Design Collaboration Forum, the colors for the preferred medallion and column collar do clash slightly, and the design team is working on options to improve this.

James asked the HAAB if there is a clear winner among the three color combination options shown on the Miro board.

- John Washington likes the first option but with the center black dot made purple. He also expressed a desire to add a border around the tile pattern.

James said that for the crash barriers, all groups of survey respondents preferred the striped alternating triangle pattern.

James added that a few key themes emerged from the open-ended survey question, and the design team will use those themes to enrich the other elements of recognition throughout the project area.

James said he feels he has clear direction on how to move forward and doesn't see the need for a formal vote on these design elements. The design team will move forward with the preferences expressed in the community design survey. He added that the design team will continue to refine the colors of the column collar tile and the medallions.

Ericka asked HAAB members if they agree with what James just stated. HAAB members responded affirmatively.

Design Team Updates

James continued to use the Miro board and moved into a discussion of the design elements that will be included in July's design survey. James noted that the elements discussed today are all elements that have been discussed at past HAAB meetings.

Walls:

Marianne Zarkin started with a discussion of Wall 15, which is on the west side of I-5 between Holladay and Oregon. It is a very large wall that will be reconstructed as part of the project.

In April, the HAAB discussed a variety of options for this wall. Marianne said the design team heard they should incorporate history as well as floating letters, while bringing in as much vegetation as possible.

Ericka asked for comments from the HAAB.

- Keith said he has pride in this, and he's concerned about how easily this could be vandalized or destroyed.
- Marianne added that the hillside, because it is very steep, should deter both camping and vandalism. She noted that these are issues the team is discussing anywhere throughout the project area with landscaping.
- John said he likes the Historic Albina option and the option with floating letters. He is also concerned about tagging, because anti-tagging coating typically only holds up for about three cleanings.

- Andrew Campbell stated he agrees with Mr. Washington. He likes the historic elements and the floating letters, and he is also concerned about maintenance.
- Estelle said she likes the idea of rotating art exhibits to keep the community engaged.
- Andrew Clarke said he would like to see illumination cast from the Albina sign down onto the panels, with an option for the panels to periodically change out.

James and Tiffany Swift then used the Miro board to explore different ideas for the highway-facing wall near Harriet Tubman Middle School. There are several names for this wall, including Wall 2A, Wall 2B and Wall 24.

Ericka asked the HAAB for their thoughts.

- Sharon brought up the importance of bringing some elements of beauty back into the area.
- John asked to bring concrete stamps back into this conversation. He would like to see roses or animals incorporated into the design somehow.
 - James said that in past conversations, the design team heard the HAAB wanted to focus on elements significant to Albina.
 - Ericka added that the focus has been on design elements that are significant to the African diaspora. She said it's definitely possible to look into how to incorporate a stamp symbol on this freeway-facing wall.
- Keith said he would like to incorporate another element that is indigenous to the local community, like trees, plants or animals.

Lettering:

James then used the Miro board to discuss different areas where lettering can be incorporated. There were no HAAB objections to including the lettering style options that will be presented in the next design survey.

Keith likes the idea of having every location read, "Historic Albina: Street Name." The other HAAB members supported this idea, and James said this option will be added to the survey.

John noted that the Multnomah/Holladay location has a lot of potential, because it is currently very drab. He would like to look at ways to make it pop.

Sharon echoed what John said, saying that this area should be vibrant and exciting, and it isn't right now. She asked the design team to consider the Jumptown initiative in their work.

James noted that this next survey will be open up to the public after the July 4 holiday.

Ericka reiterated what Sharon said earlier about bringing beauty back to the project area. This is something that everyone can look at in years to come and be proud of. The HAAB can have a part in beautifying and restoring joy to the area.

Next Steps, Adjourn

Ericka reviewed the next steps for the project. She noted that Good in the Hood is coming up this weekend, and she welcomed HAAB members to stop by. She also asked HAAB members to

distribute the July design survey to friends, family and broader networks. The project team wants to feel confident that the broader community has provided their input.

Dr. Steven Holt closed out the meeting by noting today is June 21, the longest day of the year. This process can feel very long, and he expressed his appreciation for how long the HAAB members have stayed invested. He then addressed the community at large by inviting them to keep listening in and participating.

Ericka adjourned the meeting at 5:56 pm.

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