

FISCAL YEAR 2022

**RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES PILOT (RCP) PROGRAM
PLANNING GRANT APPLICATION**

SUBMITTED BY:



PBOT
PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION



**PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION, CITY OF PORTLAND
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ALBINA VISION TRUST**

SUBMISSION DATE: OCTOBER 12, 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT THE PROJECT	1
ALBINA VISION TRUST DISTRICT VISION	1
PROJECT ACTION PLAN	1
OVERVIEW	2
LOCATION AND MAP	3
SURROUNDING COMMUNITY IMPACTED.....	3
MERIT CRITERIA 1 - EQUITY, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	5
ANALYSIS, INFORMED BY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS.....	5
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLAN	6
MERIT CRITERIA 2- MOBILITY AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY	6
MERIT CRITERIA 3- COMMUNITY-BASED STEWARDSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS	7
COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL OVERSIGHT	8
MERIT CRITERIA 4 - EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SHARED PROSPERITY	9

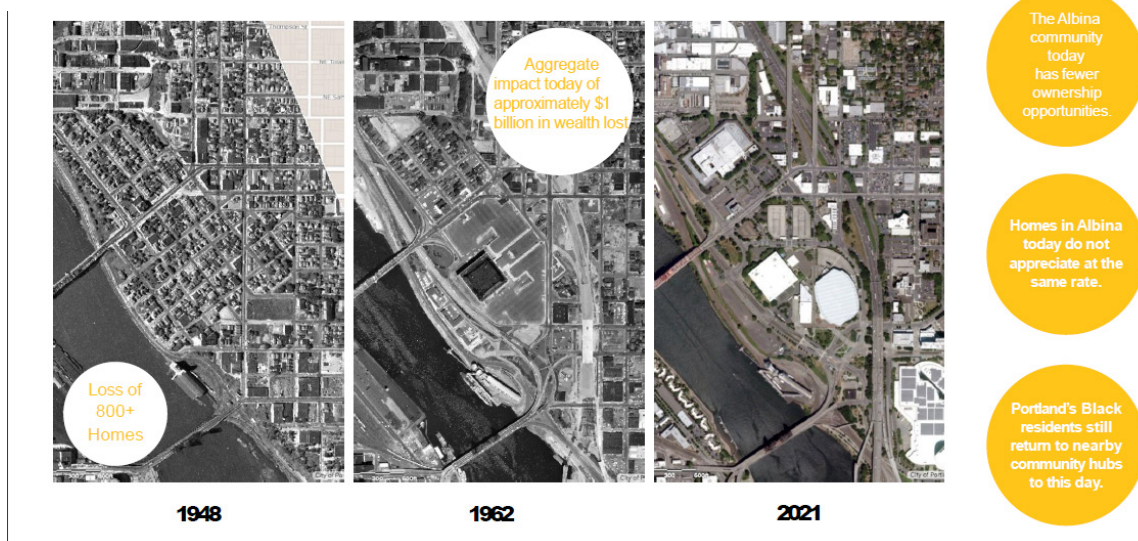


Figure 1 - Urban renewal and I-5 construction impact on Rose Quarter/Lower Albina Neighborhood from 1948 - 2021



TABLE OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1 - URBAN RENEWAL AND I-5 CONSTRUCTION
IMPACT ON ROSE QUARTER/LOWER ALBINA
NEIGHBORHOOD FROM 1948 - 2021

FIGURE 2- MAP OF GRANT PLAN AREA IN CONTEXT

FIGURE 3 - AVT COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PLAN

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1 - CHANGE IN BLACK RESIDENTS IN ALBINA, BETWEEN
1970 AND 2020 CENSUS

TABLE 2 - RACE/ETHNICITY OF RESIDENTS WITHIN THE PROJECT
AREA

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AVT	ALBINA VISION TRUST
PBOT	PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION
BPS	BUREAU OF PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY
CC2035	CENTRAL CITY 2035 PLAN
CIP	COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PLAN
EA	ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
I-5	INTERSTATE 5
I-84	INTERSTATE 84
ICA	INDEPENDENT COVER ASSESSMENT
IGA	INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT
ODOT	OREGON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
OTC	OREGON TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
RCP	RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES PILOT
PPS	PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
RQIP	ROSE QUARTER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
SAC	STEERING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TAC	TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The [City of Portland Bureau of Transportation \(PBOT\)](#) and [Albina Vision Trust \(AVT\)](#) are jointly applying for a Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Planning Grant to create a new framework with broad community engagement that define the development and governance structures needed to evaluate how the [I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project \(RQIP\)](#) area and the new land created by the highway cover can best integrate with the surrounding Rose Quarter/Lower Albina neighborhood. The purpose of this proposal is to leverage the benefits of the reconnected local streets and development opportunities due to a new and expansive I-5 highway cover. This provides the greatest opportunity to reconstitute the Black Historic Albina Community neighborhood that was decimated in the Rose Quarter area when the Interstate 5 (I-5) highway was built in 1962. Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is applying for an RCP Capital Construction Grant to help build the highway cover design proposed through the Independent Cover Assessment (ICA) and adopted in Hybrid 3 in the ICA [CAP Report](#).

ALBINA VISION TRUST DISTRICT VISION

Albina Vision Trust was created to counter the intentional displacement of Black people from the Albina neighborhoods due to urban renewal, I-5 highway 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. This project is a critical element of AVT's broader community redevelopment vision to connect the Historic Albina community over I-5 to the Willamette River.

AVT has recently completed a Community Investment Plan (CIP) for the redevelopment of the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina neighborhood adjacent to the proposed cover. It seeks to reestablish a connected, equitable and sustainable mixed-use neighborhood in the Rose Quarter/ Lower Albina area over the next thirty to fifty years.

The AVT CIP vision calls for the transformation of the historic core of Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area in the NE Quadrant of the Central City into an inclusive, vibrant, affordable, mixed-use neighborhood. Advancing this vision requires a strong partnership with the city and other public partners, including Metro and Portland Public Schools (PPS). The CIP demonstrates the anticipated benefit of redevelopment in this area to reconnect and reclaim lands condemned through urban renewal and used for building the I-5 highway, the Memorial Coliseum, and Portland Public Schools (PPS).

PROJECT ACTION PLAN

The RCP Planning Grant will engage public agency stakeholders and community members to take actions to overcome the harmful historic public policies, existing socio-economic disparities, environmental burdens, and ongoing risks that have disproportionately and inequitably impacted the Black Historic Albina community and other marginalized groups in the area. The PBOT/ AVT planning work will focus on what can and should be done via the new connections and land created by the I-5 cover within the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina neighborhood. The proposed planning work is intended to identify an urban design framework for the cover and adjacent lands and to help inform and coordinate with other potential public/private partners and projects that create shared value with the planned redevelopment and investment in the area.

When taken together these can leverage the desired restorative justice benefits for the Black Historic Albina Community in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area.

This planning grant is complementary to the multi-agency Governor’s Letter of Agreement and the Intergovernmental Government Agreement (IGA) between ODOT, Multnomah County, Metro, and the City of Portland. The Governor’s Letter of Agreement directs how the signatories to the IGA will work together to develop the I-5 Hybrid 3 cover design concept within the RQIP’s area of potential impacts as part of ODOT’s RQIP delivery.

AVT will lead the City, State, and regional partners to align the grant’s engagement processes with the actions of public partners’ policies, goals and notification procedures and requirements for legislative land use and transportation approval processes for redevelopment.

OVERVIEW

The PBOT/AVT RCP Planning Grant will expand the community’s capacity to align stakeholder investments, secure agreements between stakeholders, and conduct a process to identify legislative amendments to policies, standards, and guidelines that are needed to coordinate future project investments and development related to the highway cover and adjacent properties in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area.

The planning grant will assess, evaluate, and develop a flexible urban design framework that seeks to coordinate public and private improvements around and across the I-5 cover. It will identify stakeholder roles and responsibilities for implementing various public improvements and propose a governance structure for the newly created land that will ensure long-term stewardship and equitable development opportunities for the Black Historic Albina Community and others as recommended in the adopted ICA I-5 Hybrid 3 cover design and the ICA CAP Report.

The proposed planning work will revisit and reconcile the aspirations and objectives of the Black Historic Albina Community derived through the Albina Vision Trust CIP and the ICA I-5 Hybrid 3 cover design processes, and the City of Portland’s Central City 2035 Plan. It will convene and support more detailed analyses and design through community engagement to identify future regulatory plan amendments and agreements that can inform the long-term stewardship of the broader Rose Quarter/Lower Albina neighborhood’s redevelopment. It will also provide a strategy for scoping and convening the next steps in implementing the required infrastructure and policy investments to ensure that new resilient, climate responsive, and equitable development occurs across the I-5 cover of the RQIP area and provide a model for other redevelopment efforts in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area. It is supplemental to ODOT’s RCP Capital Construction Grant Application for RQIP that is intended to fund the capital improvements for the new cover and related highway improvements.

The deliverables shall include a Community Participation Plan, a Development Framework Plan, and a Community Stewardship Framework Agreement related to the highway cover and adjacent properties. Taken together these will constitute the basis and road map for the development and implementation of the future legislative processes and cooperative public/private agreements that can provide the greatest potential to achieve restorative justice for the Black Historic Albina Community and other displaced and marginalized communities in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area.



LOCATION AND MAP



The focus of this planning grant is the highway cover and the area that constitutes the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina neighborhood (shown in green on the Figure 2 map) in Portland Oregon’s Central City. This neighborhood surrounds the I-5 RQIP area (shown in white on the Figure 2 map). This area is bounded by N/NE Thompson Street on the north end and N/NE Everett Street near the I-5/Interstate-84 (I-84) interchange on the south end. The west and east boundaries of the planning area are the Willamette River and NE Second Avenue, respectively. This area includes the I-5 Rose Quarter Broadway/Weidler interchange and the surrounding transportation network from approximately NE Hancock Street to the north, North Benton to the west, NE Multnomah Street to the south and NE Second Avenue to the west.

SURROUNDING COMMUNITY IMPACTED

The Historic Albina community includes several neighborhoods/census tracts along the I-5 corridor between the Columbia River on the north and the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina neighborhood on the south. The Black population in these neighborhoods/census tracts has shrunk significantly since 1960 due to discriminatory public policies and redevelopment including the construction of the I-5 freeway and major urban renewal projects such as the Memorial Coliseum and Emanuel Hospital. The Black population in these census tracts has decreased by 59% or by almost 10,000 individuals during this timeframe (see Table 1).

Figure 2 - Map of Grant Plan Area in Context



Table 1: Change in Black Residents in Albina, Between 1970 and 2020 Census				
Location	1970	2020	# Change	% Change
Albina	16,419 (30% of the population)	6,697 (12% of the population)	-9,722	-59%

The planning grant area primarily consists of two Historic Albina neighborhood census tracts, 22.03 and 23.03. Thirteen percent (13%) of the population in these census tracts was African American/Black in the 2020 Census count. This is triple the 4.3 % percentage for the Black population in the City of Portland and quadruple the 2.9% of the Black population in the Portland Metro area. Table 2 shows the demographic breakdown for these Albina census tracts in 2020. They still include a significant presence of communities of color within the planning area.

Table 2: Race/ethnicity of residents within the project area			
Race/Ethnicity	Project Area	City of Portland	Multnomah County, OR
White	63%	66%	66%
Hispanic/Latino	10%	11%	13%
Black/African American	13%	6%	5%
Multiple Races	7%	7%	7%
Asian	5%	8%	8%
American Indian/Alaska Native	1%	1%	1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	<1%	1%	1%
Other	1%	1%	1%



MERIT CRITERIA 1 - EQUITY, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The PBOT/AVT RCP Planning Grant provides an opportunity to convene public and community partners to create a framework to reconnect the neighborhood and provide restorative justice for the Black Historic Albina Community and other displaced and marginalized communities via a new highway cover, street connectivity, land ownership, and wealth creation opportunities tied to the ICA I-5 Hybrid 3 cover design. It allows the City and AVT to work collaboratively with other interested public and community stakeholders to establish the design, policy, and governance parameters that will help reconstitute cover area as well as the broader Rose Quarter/Lower Albina neighborhood. This can provide new economic benefits that enrich Portland's Central City, add economic stability for the region and promote greater equity, health, and wealth opportunities for the Black Historic Albina Community and other impacted residents and businesses. Recommendations from this work will be coordinated with and inform other initiatives underway within the broader neighborhood planning area.

ANALYSIS, INFORMED BY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

The AVT District Vision and Project Action Plan will encompass and reconcile the preceding community engagement processes. In 2020-2021, the Independent Cover Assessment (ICA) conducted an analysis of the existing land use policies, the existing design standards for construction of public facilities, and an assessment of community input from members of the Black Historic Albina Community and other stakeholders in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area. The ICA team created a Development Assessment Framework to evaluate the alternative design scenarios that were studied within the base Environmental Assessment (EA) boundaries for the I-5 Rose Quarter Broadway/Weidler interchange.

Through ICA's community engagement process the I-5 Hybrid 3 cover design concept was recommended because community participants felt it delivered the greatest potential to achieve restorative justice for the Black Historic Albina Community and other area low-income and displaced communities. This cover design option was preferred by Historic Albina Community members because it delivered significantly more opportunities to restore health, wealth, and community cohesion in the area by potentially maximizing the developable land on and adjacent to the I-5 highway cover. It also created a less auto-centric freeway interchange around the cover that would otherwise prohibit the reconstitution of a vibrant, mixed-use urban neighborhood in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area.

This planning grant supports the AVT's District Vision by allowing the public and community partners to convene and coordinate the discussions and negotiations that will help set the table for the implementation of this vision and the restitution of a thriving, sustainable, resilient, mixed-use neighborhood across the cover and in the larger Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area.



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLAN

The PBOT/AVT RCP Planning Grant will support a broad engagement process with partners who are currently investing time and energy in the implementation of AVT's broader CIP efforts and ODOT's RQIP I-5 Hybrid 3 cover design. A Community Participation Plan like the one used during the ICA study will be developed by AVT to be inclusive of the processes, community members, and stakeholders of adjacent projects in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area. This plan will help evaluate the roles and responsibilities of various participants during the planning and implementation processes for the redevelopment of the cover and adjacent properties within the broader neighborhood. It will deploy the ways and means for stakeholders and community members to consider ideas and actions that reinforce area redevelopment that best aligns with the community's vision, including cooperative and complementary investments.

AVT will lead the Community Participation Plan with support from PBOT, the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS), and other City bureaus. It will convene the necessary public and community partners to conduct the additional analyses, planning and community engagement to determine the feasibility of implementing the community's vision as advanced in AVT's CIP and the ICA I-5 Hybrid 3 cover option. The following questions about how redevelopment of the I-5 highway cover and adjacent properties within the surrounding Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area can occur will be framed and answered:

1. What kind of development can occur on the I-5 highway cover and nearby properties in Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area in the near-term and long-term future?
2. How will the economic benefits of community ownership be shared with the broader community?
3. What are the required policy, regulation and code changes that need to be legislated for the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area to facilitate the desired types of development envisioned?
4. What implementing legal structures, commission resolutions, funding and financial tools, and development agreements are needed to facilitate the desired development and community stewardship of the vision that will sustain an equitable neighborhood on the I-5 highway cover and in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area long-term?
5. How do the findings identified for the I-5 highway cover and adjacent properties help inform and coordinate with other city capital improvement plans and development related activities in the broader Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area?

MERIT CRITERIA 2- MOBILITY AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY

Through urban renewal and the construction of the I-5 highway, this area of Portland's Central City has been designated as an entry point for regional vehicular access. Hence, the City's street system designations are car oriented and have become a barrier to a pedestrian friendly mixed-use urban neighborhood with safe multi-modal access. As a result, the area is burdened by disinvestment in housing and commercial development which are essential to making vibrant and active public streets and pathways commonly found in Portland's Central City. Since the original

planning for the current RQIP occurred, the Central City 2035 plan has evolved and placed greater importance on active use transport that includes walking, cycling, rolling and transit usage in this area of Portland's Central City.

The ICA process engaged the Historic Black Albina Community to determine what kind of development uses should be supported in this part of Portland's Central City. There was a strong desire to recreate a street grid that provided safe and convenient access to new destinations such as housing, jobs, healthcare, small retail and grocery stores, schools, recreation, and parks in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area. ICA's I-5 Hybrid 3 cover design concept was preferred and recommended to ODOT because it commits the City of Portland and the Oregon Department of Transportation to developing a surface street system in the area that prioritizes connectivity and safe pedestrian and bicycle access as part of the RQIP improvements.

The PBOT/AVT RCP Planning Grant will be a critical part of achieving the AVT District Vision and design and implementation related Project Action Plan needed to convert conditions dominated by vehicle use into a framework where active multi-modal transportation is a priority. ODOT's RQIP proposes to reconstruct the highway right of way to support a variety of operational and service goals for the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area within the next 20 years. One of the goals of the AVT District Vision and the Project Action Plan will be to identify where multi-modal connections in the larger Rose Quarter/Lower Albina neighborhood that cross and surround the RQIP and I-5 cover area. These are needed to provide the greatest potential for active and vital streets for business, housing and a variety of community service uses. Such facilities should drastically improve accessibility for all who live or travel in or through the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area. As a result of the reclassification and improvement of streets, compliance with the City's [Climate Action Plan](#) and [Watershed Management Plan](#) to reduce carbon emissions, flooding, and pollution due to runoff can be achieved.

MERIT CRITERIA 3- COMMUNITY-BASED STEWARDSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

The PBOT/AVT RCP Planning Grant provides the opportunity to cultivate the frameworks for a new reconnected neighborhood catalyzed by the I-5 highway cover that provides restorative justice for the Black Historic Albina Community. This also generates benefits that revitalize Portland's Central City, secures economic stability for the larger region, and promotes equity and health through sustainable compact development around and across the I-5 freeway cover and within the larger Rose Quarter/Lower Albina neighborhood.

The RCP Planning Grant will expand the community's capacity to align stakeholder investments, secure agreements between stakeholders, and convene a process for identifying anticipated legislative amendments to policy, standards, and guidelines that coordinate future project investments on the I-5 freeway cover and adjacent properties in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area.

Three main deliverables are proposed:

1. Community Participation Plan
2. Development Framework Plan
3. Community Stewardship Framework Agreement



As a package, these documents will constitute a basis and road map for the future legislative processes, investments, and partnerships that catalyze a paradigm shift from an auto dependent pattern of development around the proposed I-5 facility to future redevelopment of the I-5 highway cover and adjacent properties to facilitate a healthier, more vibrant, multi-modal neighborhood in this part of the Central City. This aligns with the vision that the Black Historic Albina Community has advocated for reconstituting in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area to provide restorative justice for the harm done to it by the City and ODOT 60 years ago when the I-5 freeway was built through it.

Through the AVT District Vision and Grant Action Plan, this project provides the potential to re-deploy public and private investments in a new and innovative way based on the creation of new land on and around the I-5 highway cover and to honor the desire of the Black Historic Albina Community for a reconstituted neighborhood in the area. It informs other development activities in the broader Rose Quarter/Lower Albina neighborhood currently being considered. This kind of public/community partnership will require a new governance structure for development of the cover land and the adjacent area that is supported by local, state, and regional laws and regulations. The value of creating a new governance framework for this redevelopment is intended to counteract the built-in bias in the real estate economy that generally creates gentrification and displacement for Black and other low-income and working-class families and businesses as a result of revitalization efforts in the urban core.

The PBOT/AVT RCP Planning Grant will be used to engage with public and community stakeholders to determine how best to establish a new system of governance for development of the newly created cover and adjacent properties that can engage in both short-term and long-term planning for catalytic and desired projects in the area. It is a plan to identify public, private, and philanthropic funding and investments needed to finance projects that are built for the benefit of the Black Historic Albina Community and other marginalized populations. Through this grant, the public and private participants that would need to be engaged in such a future community governance system will collectively define their respective roles and responsibilities for financing, making improvements, and operating new assets within the district. It will identify any state and local policies, laws, and procedures that must be in place to make such a system viable. The proposed new governance system for generating sustainable community value from the redevelopment of the I-5 freeway cover and adjacent properties will be documented in the Community Stewardship Framework Agreement. This Agreement will inform and be coordinated with other development initiatives within the broader Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area.

COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL OVERSIGHT

The Project's Steering Advisory Committee (SAC) will be led by AVT and populated by major stakeholders and community members, including PBOT, BPS, other City bureaus and public partners and project advisory groups. It will be supported by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that is constituted by the city bureaus and other public partners. The SAC will conduct reviews of the ICA CAP Report, ODOT's RQIP, and other technical analyses and policies relevant to the proposed redevelopment of the I-5 highway cover and adjacent properties and help to coordinate the development of the Grant Action Plan with broader development initiatives underway in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area.

The Planning Grant's SAC's and TAC's roles and responsibilities will include:

1. Broadening engagement with stakeholders and community members in alignment with and in preparation for a future legislative process to amend comprehensive plan policies and standards, as needed.
2. Determining optimal developable land assembly and transfer from transportation use to a non-transportation or community development uses.
3. Assessing community land ownership models that can assume the responsibility for planning, investment, development, and operations of newly created I-5 highway cover and adjacent properties through community based stewardship.
4. Tracking the feasibility analyses of achievable development afforded by connecting land across the I-5 highway covers and identifying adjacent properties for redevelopment.
5. Tracking the feasibility for the implementation of the I-5 Hybrid 3 cover design concept intended to catalyze the conditions for sustainable development for and by community stakeholders in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina neighborhood and providing accountability for deviation from the original concept.

MERIT CRITERIA 4 - EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SHARED PROSPERITY

AVT will lead efforts to support the AVT District Vision and Grant Action Plan in the Rose Quarter/ Lower Albina neighborhood. In partnership with PBOT, BPS and other City partners it will convene public stakeholders and community members to confirm the Black Historic Albina Community's priorities for redevelopment of the I-5 highway cover and adjacent properties within the broader Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area. The first tasks shall be to refine the boundary of the planning area, identify adjacent opportunity sites near the I-5 highway cover , assess development opportunities and constraints of the vision , and identify anticipated jurisdictional policies and agreements that need to be developed to facilitate the greatest potential for actualization of shared community vision.

There are four main parts to creating a Development Framework:

Land Use Framework Plan to describe the role of I-5 highway cover and the connections to adjacent properties and uses within the broader the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina area. This shall establish the catalytic policies and projects to accelerate mixed-use development on the I-5 highway covers and adjacent properties that supports the Black Historic Albina Community's goals and objectives for the reconstitution of an active and vital neighborhood.

Street Framework Plan to inform capital construction projects and private development proposals in the area to improve connectivity to and through the I-5 highway cover and adjacent properties. This document will serve as the conceptual foundation for a future Master Street Plan and Right of Way Standards for the district including:

- Multi Modal Transportation Network
- Primary and Secondary Streets
- Transit operations for updated Multi Modal Transportation Network

Public Realm Framework Plan to identify places for coordination between the location of I-5 highway cover, and shared street corridors, pathways, and nodes that connect the I-5 highway cover to a broader open space network. It ensures that community goals for public spaces and their use by Black Historic Albina Community and others are aligned with environmental and other considerations through the infrastructure development process.

Governance Framework Plan to assess and identify potential public/private/community investments and related equity outcomes associated with investments and potential cost sharing opportunities and economic benefits that can be enabled to support restorative justice and provide greater opportunities for community health, wealth, and cohesion. The Governance Framework Plan shall include Programmatic goals for a mix of uses to maximize capital investment in and around the I-5 highway cover and adjacent properties. It shall include a costing related to lid and parcel creation/vertical development/and infrastructure improvements. It shall include a cost-sharing model for infrastructure capital and operational costs in the Rose Quarter/Lower Albina planning area with a list projects to be included in the City of Portland's capital improvement plan.

The goal of creating new frameworks and a community governance model for development via this Grant Action Plan is to innovate new kinds of public/private partnership that show how risks and benefits of urban core revitalization can be shared more equitably between community developers, owners, tenants, residents, and the larger public. AVT has demonstrated there is potential to recapture value on the land in this area of the Central City if it is returned to the ownership of the Black Community to subsidize development of a reconstituted neighborhood that provides sustainable assistance for renters and legacy homeowners, small businesses and entrepreneurs, and leverages investment to preserve, rehabilitate, and expand affordable and mixed-income housing, mixed use development, affordable commercial spaces, and other community wealth-building services and uses. The AVT Project Vision and Grant Action Plan help create the tools required to catalyze new opportunities for the long-term equity, benefit, and sustainability of the community in this area of the Central City.



Figure 3 - AVT Community Investment Plan

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 4, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

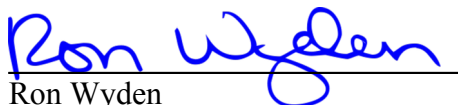
We write in strong support of the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) Reconnecting Communities construction grant application and the City of Portland and Albina Vision Trust's Reconnecting Communities planning grant application for the Interstate-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project. This Project represents a historic opportunity to repair the harm done to the Albina neighborhood, the heart of Portland, Oregon's Black community, which was torn apart by the original construction of I-5 in the 1960s.

Local and regional governments, and community groups have embraced a vision that reconnects and revitalizes the historic Albina neighborhood. Notably, the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project will include a highway cover over I-5 that reconnects the street grid and can support future development, which will provide a significant investment in the community and in the people who are helping to build this Project. It will provide opportunities to heal the social, economic, and environmental damage done to the Black community in the 50 years since the highway corridor's creation. The Project includes an intentional program to maximize small and minority-owned business involvement and a diverse workforce, which if done as planned stands to represent one of the most significant contracting opportunities in Oregon's history, getting people to work and building careers.

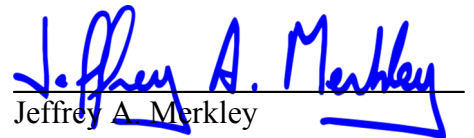
The project has the potential to be truly transformational – adding multiple blocks of retail, green space, and housing to revitalize an area that has previously been defined by displacement, racial injustice, and broken promises. The Project will provide new community connections and support economic growth and represents a key step towards reconnecting our community.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of this grant application.

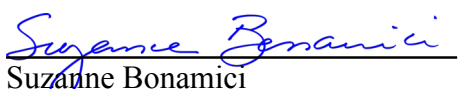
Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Transportation

Urban Mobility Office

123 NW Flanders

Portland, OR 97209

October 10, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) is strongly supportive of the City of Portland's Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program planning grant application, submitted in partnership with the Albina Vision Trust. The planning grant application to develop place-based strategies to leverage the newly reconnected local streets and new land that construction of the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project's highway cover will create also aligns with ODOT's capital construction grant application, which requests funding for the initial investment to build the highway cover.

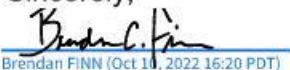
The original I-5 construction in the 1950s and 60s divided the Albina neighborhood, which was then the heart of Portland's Black community, and was part of a series of public and private developments that led to disinvestment in Albina and the displacement of many of its residents, businesses, and community institutions. In spite of this history, most of Portland's historic Black churches, social justice organizations, and social service agencies are still anchored in Albina and the surrounding neighborhoods, and the area remains a cultural and emotional hub for many Black Portlanders.

Restorative justice is one of the four values that guide the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project, and the Project has empowered members of Portland's Black community to define how it can begin to knit the community back together. We understand the community sees significant opportunities to create space for businesses that build health, wealth and social services, and streets and public spaces that offer safe access and connections. The City and Albina Vision Trust's planning focus on the Rose Quarter / Lower Albina neighborhood that surrounds the Project area will evaluate how the broader neighborhood integrates with the new land created by the Project's highway cover. This planning effort is critical to establishing a flexible urban design framework that engages Portland's Black community and seeks to coordinate public and private improvements around and across the Project's highway cover and the Rose Quarter / Lower Albina neighborhood, in a way that can leverage the desired restorative benefits for the Black Historic Albina community.

ODOT believes this effort has the potential to be truly transformational, bringing new community connections that support economic growth and an opportunity to support the community vision for the Albina neighborhood.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of this grant application.

Sincerely,



Brendan FINN (Oct 10, 2022 16:20 PDT)

Brendan Finn
Urban Mobility Office Director, Oregon Department of Transportation

PBOT

PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION

1120 SW Fifth Ave, Suite 1331, Portland OR 97204

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Jo Ann Hardesty Commissioner **Chris Warner** Director

October 06, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The City of Portland is strongly supportive of two Reconnecting Communities applications for the Interstate-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project (RQIP). The first is the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) capital construction application. The second is our planning grant application submitted in partnership with the Albina Vision Trust.

The original construction of Interstate 5 (I-5) in the 1950s and 60s divided the Albina neighborhood, which was then the heart of Portland's Black community, and was part of a series of public and private developments that led to disinvestment in Albina and the displacement of many of its residents, businesses, and community institutions. In spite of this history, most of Portland's historic Black churches, social justice organizations, and social service agencies are still anchored in Albina and the surrounding neighborhoods, and the area remains a cultural and emotional hub for many Black Portlanders.

Restoring justice to Black residents from Albina is one of four values that guide the RQIP, and the project has empowered members of Portland's Black community to define how this project can begin to knit the community back together. The project design has long included covers over the highway, and ODOT engaged an independent consultant team to recommend a design and implementation plan for the cover that not only reconnects Historic Albina, but also benefits the Black community into the future. The project is guided by the Historic Albina Advisory Board (HAAB), which consists entirely of Black people with ties to the Albina neighborhood. The community sees significant opportunities to create space for businesses that build wealth, health and social services, and streets and public spaces that offer safe access and connections.



It is the policy of the City of Portland that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in any city program, service, or activity on the grounds of race, color, national origin, disability, or other protected class status. Adhering to Civil Rights Title VI and ADA Title II civil rights laws, the City of Portland ensures meaningful access to City programs, services, and activities by reasonably providing: translation and interpretation, modifications, accommodations, alternative formats, and auxiliary aids and services. To request these services, contact the Portland Bureau of Transportation at 503-823-5185 or 311 (503-823-4000), for Relay Service & TTY: 711.

The Reconnecting Communities Capital Construction grant would provide an initial investment in building a cover where the community's vision can come to fruition. The recommended highway cover design – which has broad support from the HAAB, community organizations and stakeholders, partner agencies, and Oregon's governor – will reconnect part of the street grid that made Albina a vibrant and walkable neighborhood, create new high-quality development space for businesses and community services, and add much-needed bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities. The grant will help to build the physical space for these new elements and unlock the potential for additional investments to develop the cover.

The City of Portland and Albina Vision Trust are submitting a complementary planning grant to advance the work necessary to fully realize the potential of the covers. The work will identify place-based strategies that leverage the newly reconnected local streets and new land that construction of the highway cover will create and is essential to full realization of the stated values and goals of the RQIP.

Thank you for your full consideration of these two grant applications.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Warner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chris Warner, Director
Portland Bureau of Transportation



Portland Public Schools Board of Education

501 N Dixon St. Portland, OR 97227
503-916-3741 • schoolboard@pps.net

Julia Brim-Edwards
Michelle DePass
Herman Greene
Gary Hollands
Amy Kohnstamm
Eilidh Lowery
Andrew Scott
Byronie McMahon (SR)

October 3, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We write today in strong support of the City of Portland and Albina Vision Trust's Reconnecting Communities planning application for the Interstate-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project as well as the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) Reconnecting Communities grant application.

This Project will begin to knit back together the neighborhood that was separated by the completion of Interstate 5 (I-5) in the 1960s, with construction starting a decade earlier. I-5 is an important link on the regional Interstate System for the traveling public and truck freight and businesses moving goods, providing a wide variety of economic benefits to the Portland Metro region, the State of Oregon, and the nation as a whole.

Notably, the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project will include a highway cover over I-5 that reconnects the street grid and can support future development, which will provide a significant investment in the community and in the people who are helping to build this Project. It will provide opportunities for living-wage jobs and economic development, benefitting Black Portlanders, the community most impacted by the original construction of the freeway. The Project includes an intentional program to maximize small and minority-owned business involvement and a diverse workforce, which if done as planned stands to represent one of the most significant contracting opportunities in Oregon's history, getting people to work and building careers.

As the largest school district in Oregon whose school communities and surrounding neighborhoods have been repeatedly harmed by the original construction of I-5, we want to ensure that this project will not only support economic growth for our families, but that it represents a key step towards reconnecting this community and creating a better future for its residents.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of this grant application.

Sincerely,

Portland Public Schools Board of Education



October 4, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write today in strong support of the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) Reconnecting Communities construction grant application and the City of Portland and Albina Vision Trust's Reconnecting Communities planning application for the Interstate-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project. This Project will not only reduce congestion and improve safety at the State's top bottleneck, but also begin to knit back together the neighborhood that was separated by the original construction of Interstate 5 (I-5) in the 1960s. I-5 is an important link on the regional Interstate System for the traveling public and truck freight and businesses moving goods, providing a wide variety of economic benefits to the Portland Metro region, the State of Oregon, and the nation as a whole.

Notably, the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project will include a highway cover over I-5 that reconnects the street grid and can support future development, which will provide a significant investment in the community and in the people who are helping to build this Project. It will provide opportunities for living-wage jobs and economic development, benefitting Black Portlanders, the community most impacted by the original construction of the Interstate. The Project includes an intentional program to maximize small and minority-owned business involvement and a diverse workforce, which if done as planned stands to represent one of the most significant contracting opportunities in Oregon's history, getting people to work and building careers.

Congestion on I-5 in the Rose Quarter area is the worst in the state and has the highest crash rate of any interstate in Oregon. This affects the ability to deliver goods on time, which results in increased costs and uncertainty for businesses. Once this project is complete, it will make travel more predictable and safer for people driving and transporting goods by adding new auxiliary lanes and full shoulders to smooth traffic flow and reduce frequent crashes from weaving and merging. The Project will provide new community connection and support economic growth and represents a key step towards reconnecting our communities.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of this grant application. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lance".

Lance J. Randall
Executive Director

September 27, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write today in strong support of the Oregon Department of Transportation's (ODOT) *Reconnecting Communities* construction grant application and the City of Portland and Albina Vision Trust's *Reconnecting Communities* planning application for the *Interstate-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project*. This Project will not only reduce congestion and improve safety at the State's top bottleneck but also begin to knit back together the neighborhood that was separated by the original construction of Interstate 5 (I-5) in the 1960s. I-5 is an important link on the regional interstate system for the traveling public as well as for truck freight and businesses moving goods, providing a wide variety of economic benefits to the Portland Metro region, the State of Oregon, and the nation as a whole.

Notably, the *I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project* will include a highway cover over I-5 that reconnects the street grid and can support future development, which will provide a significant investment in the community and in the people who are helping to build this Project. It will provide opportunities for living-wage jobs and economic development, benefitting Black Portlanders, the community most impacted by the original construction of the Interstate. The Project includes an intentional program to maximize small and minority-owned business involvement and a diverse workforce, which, if done as planned, stands to represent one of the most significant contracting opportunities in Oregon's history, getting people to work and building careers.

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Thank you for your full and fair consideration of this grant application. Should you have any questions, please contact me at jrogers@cobmportland.org.

Sincerely,



J. Kamau Rogers – President
Coalition of Black Men

2828 NE Alberta St.
Portland, OR 97211

info@cobmpdx.org

(503) 919-6804

@COBM

cobmpdx.org



October 10, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The Coalition of Communities of Color is strongly supportive of the Reconnecting Communities planning application for the Interstate-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project (RQIP) submitted by the City of Portland's Bureau of Transportation in partnership with the Albina Vision Trust (AVT). The Coalition of Communities of Color is an alliance of culturally specific organizations dedicated to collective action for racial justice and based in the Portland metro area. We believe that AVT's work is critical to strengthening Portland's Black communities.

The original construction of Interstate 5 (I-5) in the 1950s and 60s divided the Albina neighborhood, which was then the heart of Portland's Black community, and was part of a series of public and private developments that led to disinvestment in Albina and the displacement of many of its residents, businesses, and community institutions. In spite of this history, most of Portland's historic Black churches, social justice organizations, and social service agencies are still anchored in Albina and the surrounding neighborhoods, and the area remains a cultural and emotional hub for many Black Portlanders.

Restoring justice to Black residents from Albina is one of four values that guide the RQIP, and the project has empowered members of Portland's Black community to define how this project can begin to knit the community back together. The project design has long included covers over the highway, and ODOT engaged an independent consultant team to recommend a design and implementation plan for the cover that not only reconnects Historic Albina, but also benefits the Black community into the future. The community sees significant opportunities to create space for businesses that build wealth, health and social services, and streets and public spaces that offer safe access and connections.

The Rose Quarter Improvement Project has the potential to advance social, economic, and environmental justice by catalyzing necessary transportation infrastructure investment needed in the Albina neighborhood. The Reconnecting Communities Planning grant is critical for ensuring the promise is met with action.

Thank you for your full consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jenny Lee', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jenny Lee, Deputy Director
Coalition of Communities of Color



**PROTECTING YOUR
RIGHT TO ROAM**

October 10, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Oregon Walks is strongly supportive of the Reconnecting Communities planning application for the Interstate-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project (RQIP) submitted by the City of Portland's Bureau of Transportation in partnership with the Albina Vision Trust (AVT).

The original construction of Interstate 5 (I-5) in the 1950s and 60s divided the Albina neighborhood, which was then the heart of Portland's Black community, and was part of a series of public and private developments that led to disinvestment in Albina and the displacement of many of its residents, businesses, and community institutions. In spite of this history, most of Portland's historic Black churches, social justice organizations, and social service agencies are still anchored in Albina and the surrounding neighborhoods, and the area remains a cultural and emotional hub for many Black Portlanders.

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The Reconnecting Communities Capital Construction grant would provide an initial investment in building a cover where the community's vision can come to fruition. The recommended highway cover design will reconnect part of the street grid that made Albina a vibrant and walkable neighborhood, create new high-quality development space for businesses and community services, and add much-needed bicycle, pedestrian, and transit facilities. The grant will help to build the physical space for these new elements and unlock the potential for additional investments to develop the cover.



PROTECTING YOUR
RIGHT TO ROAM

Oregon Walks supports the City of Portland and AVT's proactive approach to fully realizing the potential of the covers Oregon Walks is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit membership organization dedicated to promoting walking and making the conditions for walking safe, convenient and attractive throughout the Portland metropolitan region. We strongly support reconnecting communities that have been disconnected by the past decisions to build freeways through communities of color.

Thank you for your full consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashton Simpson".

Ashton Simpson, Executive Director
Oregon Walks

October 10, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590



Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Word is Bond is strongly supportive of the Reconnecting Communities planning application for the Interstate-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project (RQIP) submitted by the City of Portland's Bureau of Transportation in partnership with the Albina Vision Trust (AVT).

The original construction of Interstate 5 (I-5) in the 1950s and 60s divided the Albina neighborhood, which was then the heart of Portland's Black community, and was part of a series of public and private developments that led to disinvestment in Albina and the displacement of many of its residents, businesses, and community institutions. In spite of this history, most of Portland's historic Black churches, social justice organizations, and social service agencies are still anchored in Albina and the surrounding neighborhoods, and the area remains a cultural and emotional hub for many Black Portlanders.

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The Rose Quarter Improvement Project has the potential to advance social, economic, and environmental justice by catalyzing necessary transportation infrastructure investment needed in the Albina neighborhood. The Reconnecting Communities Planning grant is critical for ensuring the promise is met with action.

Thank you for your full consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lakayana Drury".

Lakayana Drury
Founder and Executive Director, Word is Bond