

January 20  
2021

Work Session 1

ODOT // I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project

# Independent Cover Assessment

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## Overview of ICA Work Session 1

### Purpose of Independent Cover Assessment

1. The Independent Cover Assessment (ICA) team is charged with engaging the community in a visioning process to help create alternative designs for the covers that will more closely align with Black community goals.
2. Key stakeholders in the Black community have objected to the current design of the highway covers.
3. The ICA community engagement process includes work sessions to help us understand what type of uses, spaces and character are most important to the historic Black residents and others to create a sense of community place and belonging in the design of the highway covers.

### Goals of Planned Community Work Sessions

The ICA community engagement process is described in the team's Facilitation Needs Assessment document. The process for organizing, evaluating and measuring outcomes for alternate highway cover scenarios is described in the Development Assessment Framework document.

1. To facilitate a process that helps build a new neighborhood vision for this area and develops design options.
2. To identify public partnerships that can have long-lasting restorative benefits for the historic N/NE neighborhoods.
3. To determine how the highway covers can best function to reconnect the Rose Quarter island with the rest of the historic N/NE community.
4. To understand the role of this neighborhood in supporting community cohesion within the Black Portland Diaspora in the metro area.
5. To recommend scenarios that make the integration and promotion of restorative justice outcomes a priority and set the table for building a revitalized neighborhood in this area that celebrates and engages the multi-cultural history of the N/NE Portland.
6. To determine what alternative highway covers could look like based on input from the Black community and other interested stakeholders.

### Plan for Work Session 1

Work Session 1 is intended to facilitate a dialogue that helps the ICA team better understand community aspirations and overall priorities for neighborhood development on the Rose Quarter

Improvement Project highway covers. The goal will be to use the conclusions from this discussion with the Historic Albina Community participants and other stakeholders to inform the Development Assessment Framework process to help us construct and evaluate alternative scenarios. The goal/theme for the first community work session are:

**Goal: Listen/Assess**

**Theme: “How can these covers be used to support the community’s vision for neighborhood revitalization and provide restorative justice?”**

## Questions for Work Session 1

### **What are the community’s vision, values and desired outcomes?**

1. What ingredients need to be present to create a new vibrant Rose Quarter neighborhood that feels like a community neighborhood again for those who have been displaced?
2. What role can the highway covers play to catalyze these changes?
3. If the only thing that changes in the near-term is the space created on top of the highway covers, what type of spaces need to be provided on them to set the table for reconstituting a neighborhood in this area in the future?
4. What kind of spaces will best provide restorative justice?
5. How can we measure whether the design options actually provide some restorative justice?

### **What constraints and opportunities should guide creation of scenarios?**

1. What issues are we trying to solve for through our community engagement process and development of alternative designs?
2. The ICA team needs to start with the existing design and determine what elements of this design are acceptable and unacceptable to the participants of the Historic Albina Community. Does the current design help create a new neighborhood and for whom? Does it address restorative justice outcomes and in what ways?
3. The Black community has indicated it wants to see solutions that provide restorative justice for those displaced from the historic neighborhood. How can the desired restorative justice goals be translated/communicated in the design of the covers? What else needs to happen around the covers to seed a new vibrant neighborhood in the area that aligns with their vision?

### **What metrics can be used to measure success?**

During Work Session 1, workshop participants and advisory committee members will confirm, prioritize and supplement the I5/Rose Quarter Improvement Project outcomes that have previously been identified as important through earlier community engagement processes as the desired outcomes for the design of the highway covers. The ICA team will then use this feedback to organize, assess and measure the community’s desired outcomes against the developed highway cover design scenarios.

1. What outcomes can best measure whether the future vision of the Black community is achieved and that they are meaningful and purposeful?
2. What is the appropriate scale of improvements to address and support Black community cohesion for the Historic Albina Neighborhood and the Black Diaspora spread throughout the metro area? How can this be measured?
3. What are the priority design and policy improvements necessary to sustain Historic Albina as a cultural hub for the Black community and what outcomes are needed to measure the success of these priority improvements?
4. How can the Black community's programmatic goals such as supporting health, affordable housing, wealth-creation, and community self-determination best be addressed in the design scenarios of the highway covers, and what outcomes will help us measure the project's success at addressing these goals?

## Background for Creating a New Story

1. This area was once a vibrant neighborhood with housing, small businesses, and activated street fronts.
2. It was the center of the Black community life in Portland in the 1950s.
3. The land was then taken and cleared through eminent domain by the City to build the Memorial Coliseum in the mid-1950s.
4. The Black community was displaced and pushed further north into N/NE Portland.
5. Then came the construction of the I-5 freeway in the mid-1960s that cut a path through the middle of the Historic Albina Neighborhoods north of the Rose Quarter, causing additional displacement of Black residents and businesses, many of whom had been displaced for the building of the Memorial Coliseum.
6. Finally, in the early 1970s Emanuel Hospital and the City cleared many blocks of homes and businesses around the hospital using eminent domain to expand the hospital's campus. This third urban renewal event displaced and scattered the nucleus of the Black business community that had been relocated and had created a center of community life in the neighborhoods around the hospital after being displaced from the Memorial Coliseum area.
7. Community activist groups worked to improve the quality of life in the N/NE neighborhoods on all fronts over the next quarter century and had some measure of success as is evidenced by the residential housing market beginning to become more viable and attractive by the 1990s. However, this newly found marketability soon created additional waves of displacement for Black residents and businesses who lived and worked in the area, slowly gentrifying the area, and pushing rents and home prices out of reach for many Black Portlanders by 2010.
8. Despite all these public actions that have dismantled and scattered Portland's Black community across the metro area over the last 70 years, N/NE Portland still remains the most viable cultural and emotional hub for many Black Portlanders who were born and raised here and remember having a community, and a place that represented Black cultural identity. Most of the historic Black churches, Black social justice organizations and the largest Black social service agencies are still anchored in N/NE Portland despite

the displacement of many Black residents. So this area is still a base for Black Portlanders despite the changes that have occurred.

9. There is still a strong desire in many segments of the Black community to revitalize Historic Albina as a cultural center for Portland's Black Diaspora.