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MEMORANDUM

To: City of Portland Design Commission
From: Megan Channell, I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project Director
Re: I-5 Rose Quarter Supplemental Environmental Assessment
Date: December 1, 2022

At your December 15 meeting you will be receiving an update about the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project from City and ODOT staff and their consultants. The Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the project was just published by the Federal Highway Administration and examines the environmental effects associated with the updated [“Hybrid 3” highway cover design](#) as further developed by ODOT.

In advance of this presentation you can learn about the project and SEA through the [Online Open House](#). ODOT is holding a 50-day public comment period through January 4, 2023. This is longer than the typical 30-day comment period to account for the holidays. There will also be a virtual public hearing on December 14, 2022 where oral testimony will be heard.

A variety of SEA technical reports and appendices can be found on the [project website](#) and may be of interest to you also.

Thank you for your time learning about the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project and the SEA. We look forward to sharing more information about the project with you at your December meeting.

Background

In July 2022, Portland City Council unanimously approved an intergovernmental agreement with the Oregon Department of Transportation to formally re-join the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project. Since then, staff from PBOT and other City bureaus have been coordinating with staff from ODOT’s Urban Mobility Office and consultant team on project development, including incorporating updates that have been made to the project design as a result of the Independent Highway Cover Assessment and the community engagement that continues to shape the project.

Extensive engagement with the City, Metro, Multnomah County, TriMet, Portland Streetcar Inc., major land owners, businesses, stakeholders, the Albina Vision Trust and the public will inform design refinement, which would happen as the Project is advanced to construction following a NEPA decision on the SEA. Final design elements involving the local street network will require City review and approval as part of the local permitting processes.

Among the changes to the proposed project design since the original 2019 EA include building a single, longer and stronger highway cover capable of supporting up to 6-story buildings on top, moving the I-5 southbound off-ramp from Broadway further south to N. Wheeler Ave, and locating the bicycle and pedestrian facilities along the Broadway/Weidler Couplet rather than on a separate off-street bridge over I-5.

These changes were the result of an [independent cover assessment](#) led by ZGF Architects and with input from the community and the Historic Albina Advisory Board. In addition to the City, Hybrid 3 has been endorsed by TriMet, Multnomah County, Metro, Portland Public Schools and Albina Vision Trust as the community's preferred design solution. ZGF recently won [an award](#) for the firm's work developing the Hybrid 3 cover concept.