



THE BUREAU OF **PLANNING
& SUSTAINABILITY**

Community Involvement Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: January 14, 2025 | **Location:** Vanport & Zoom

Attending Committee Members: Jim, Susan, Calvin

Attending Staff: Valeria Tapia, Troy Doss, Cayla McGrail, Marco Mejia Yepez

Special guest: Kayin Davis, Albina Vision Trust

Agenda

Welcome + Introductions (5:00- 5:14)

Reconnecting Albina Planning Project and Albina Vision Trust (5:14 – 6:45)

Project Brief: Reconnecting Albina Planning Project (RAPP) is a partnership between Albina Vision Trust and the City of Portland to create urban development strategies that center restorative development for Portland's Black community and reconnect the physical fabric of the Lower Albina neighborhood.

Please view the [project website](#), and/or the project background document and presentation included in the E-Files folder for more information.

Introduction / Historic Context

Project team shared [Albina Vision Trailer](#) and comparative photos from the 1940s, 1960s, early 2000s, and 2020s. These showcase the intense change in the area that affected residents, especially urban renewal and displacement from Interstate 5 and other construction projects.

Lower Albina, located south of Russell, is part of larger Albina area that includes Eliot, Boise, King, Humboldt, Overlook, Irvington & Piedmont

About the Project & Project Team

The purpose is to create urban development strategies, foster equitable and sustainable outcomes, center restorative justice for Portland's Black Communities. This project is focusing on a smaller area and project within the larger multi-project area between Summer 2024 – Winter / Spring 2026. This project is part of an effort to leverage area projects to have a larger improved impact than just individual projects.

Visit the [About Page](#) for related projects and project area.

The project area includes [Albina Vision Trust's Community Investment Plan area](#), which is 94 acres and extends to 110 acres with the inclusion of the highway cap. Focus is on wealth generation, housing, transportation, clean energy, community connection, and more.

Foundations of Engagement: AVT Community Investment Plan

AVT has and will continue to engage in various kinds of activities and outreach. The project is centering Black engagement, ensuring community members have meaningful spaces to dream and deepen technical grasps of economic, cultural, and infrastructure implications of development in Lower Albina while fostering two-way education and giveback opportunities. Engagement seeks to understand how the project and area can go beyond the basics to provide necessary spaces for community wealth and development. Spaces have been intentional where community members engage together, often without planners and/or City of Portland presence.

Some highlights: Sunday dinner events and Scenario development workshops

RAPP Engagement Framework includes 5 types of outreach:

- JOY! Initiatives centers both community outreach and giveback
- Education & Tour Series are activity and experiential based, such as walking tours
- Design & Feedback provide community focused updates while gathering dynamic feedback
- Street Team is the ongoing engagement and general tabling
- Presentations & Briefings

Social media has been a major success for AVT, with viral videos reaching 40,000 views and thousands of followers from all over who are interested in the project as an example of restorative justice.

Success stories: Member of the community regularly attended events and worked up to be an extension of the outreach team to lead engagement; Another member of the community joined the board.

Engagement values:

- Community care & involvement
 - Education on both sides
 - Honor the voices who have been involved for a long time
- Important to understand that engagement centers Black engagement and vision
 - Though still valuable to get all of us supporting initiative project
 - Repair past harms, honor and celebrate community histories,
 - AVT building the trust and not having City involved in all aspects of gatherings

While AVT & others are constantly in community whether or not they are involved in formal engagement work, project is moving into a new phase where people will not be engaged with in the



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same way as previously. Many who are engaged have deep connections to the neighborhood and AVT is encouraging community members to see where they fit within the project and provide support. This can look like investing in area, supporting arts and culture, or more. A goal is to create and showcase ways the Black community can thrive in the area.

Upcoming RAPP Engagement Calendar

Date/ time, location	Event	Purpose / Outcome
February 27, 5 – 7 PM at AVT office	Community Kick Off!	Set tone, share goals & objectives, celebrate Separate but joint efforts
April (TBD)	Culture in the Built Environment	Scenario development for consideration Example: What do you do for a community who wants porches in a high density neighborhood? How do you create a sense of “eyes on the street” without being watched?
June (TBD)	Redevelopment Opportunities	Site prioritization, redevelopment / nodes, public realm
September (TBD)	Responsive Infrastructure	Input on new streets, connections & landscaping, Broadway Mainstreet Project

Ongoing Engagement includes a website, news articles, interactive maps, and a potential Story Map. Hoping to use tools other projects have used to kind of replicate success in gaining insight into visions & concerns of the area. Some deeper analysis is needed to understand who is using it, though contact information is optional, and where outreach is needed more. Many of the comments thus far about transportation, public facilities, safety and access, lack of civic spaces. Valeria checks once a week for comments and has a dashboard to view.

CIC Discussions & Feedback

RAPP’s questions:

Q: In addition to RAPP education series, how else can we bridge the gap between community ideas and the technical elements we seek their feedback on?

An example of the gap between ideas and technical elements: Waterfront park area has railroad and traffic lanes (technical), so how do you communicate the many ways the difference between what can happen in the area, what can’t happen, and what needs to happen, like going through



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development/planning/engineering processes in a way that does not discourage people with the many steps and how long it takes to get to their vision.

A: It is important to right set expectations while understanding that people can grasp technical things and have experiences with how long things can take. Planning is a language with technical language that is not always the same language the community may use, so essential to speak in their terms Important to speak using community language.

Empower the members who regularly attend events to become part of the engagement team, which reflects a goal of the work AVT is already doing. It might be best to ask community members how to bridge the gap, how do we meet in the middle to understand different things together, how to interpret information and create a feedback loop that best shows the community their views and visions.

Q: What are the committee's thoughts and feedback on the StoryMap idea? What are your experiences using the tool?

Note, an issue of the website and other communication is too much information to put in one thing

A: It seems like StoryMaps are a next big thing for planning engagement, but really need to understand who is excited about using the tool and how the tool enhances engagement. It can feel more academic and not community based, so think about different social media avenues that could be more beneficial. Understand attention in online spaces, that people may not have the focus, while understanding where people are going for information online.

Though, different StoryMap features could be beneficial for the story the project is wanting to share, such as the slider tool on photos to see the changes in the area.

Q: How else can we honor the foundational engagement received to date in the district, since it is important to honor that we are not starting from scratch?

A: AVT is already doing a really great job.

Though there was no direct answer to honoring foundational engagement, some suggestions for upcoming engagement include:



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1. Tease out some of the elements from your engagement events like Culture in the Built Environment or Redevelopment Opportunities to have multi-series events. This would allow focus to be on one piece of the larger section while continually working with community. It could be beneficial to better understand what the community view point is of a wellness center, an art district, etc.

RAPP response: Project subareas will be broken down in outreach events.

2. Partner with institutions like PSU and others that can bring students and others into the project while perhaps creating other benefits.

AVT Response: Kayin is a visiting professor in architecture programs and AVT is already engaging with various schools. One project Kayin mentioned was Rebuilding Cornerstones studio where elementary students worked with Graduate architecture students around questions like what is home, to understand a youth perspective on some of these concepts the project is pushing forward.

3. Continue to right size expectations.

CIC question: How is this project’s outreach ensuring independence from the freeway expansion project? Will this project be able to move forward independently of the freeway expansion project, given that the freeway expansion may not occur or may be significantly delayed?

- RAPP is distance from that project and does not want to be part of the expansion
- Expansion will happen in phases and stages. Visit 1-5 Rose Quarter for more information.

What's next? How can CIC show up?

Connect with the Project

Share information and events with network

Support and engage the work

Listen to testimony at City Council, AVT presentation starts around 1:21 timestamp

Announcements & Updates (6:45 – 7:05)

- Comp Plan presentation for February's meeting
- Stay tuned for Engagement Officer announcement



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Action Items / Follow Ups

- Continue drafting training materials
- Connect with Engagement Officer on what their priorities are in the role
- Continue discussion on committee visibility using website and other materials

Adjourn (7:05)



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