

то:	City Planning Commission
FROM:	Staff of City Planning Commission Lloyd T. Keefe, Director
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SUBJECT :	Review of Survey and Planning Stage Activities For the Albina Neighborhood Improvement Project

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I. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- a. The purpose of this report is to summarize the results of the survey and planning work by the staffs of the Portland Development Commission and the City Planning Commission. Through preliminary review by the Development Commission, the Planning Commission, and the Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee, it is anticipated that procedural and policy questions may be resolved so that the official report "Part I, Application for Loan and Grant" may be submitted to the members of the Portland Development Commission for approval and submission to the Federal Government.
- b. Following review by the regional office of the Housing and Home Finance Agency, the Albina Neighborhood Improvement Plan will be open for discussion at a Public Hearing and then must receive approval of the Development Commission, Planning Commission and City Council.
- c. Following these official approvals, the final documented report "Part II, Application for Loan and Grant" will be submitted to the Federal Government for approval by Mr. Slayton, Commissioner of the Urban Renewal Administration in Washington, D. C.
- d. To summarize, the purpose of this report is to provide available information for review by the following groups:

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Portland Development Commission	September 4	
Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee	September 6	>

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II. HISTORICAL SKETCH

- 1960 The idea for an improvement program began to take shape as a result of a one-day "Community Conference on The Problems, Needs and Resources of The Albina District" sponsored by The Urban League on January 30, 1960, at the Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church. John Kenward, Executive Director of the Portland Development Commission and Charles Woodward, Past Director of the City Planning Commission, participated in a panel to discuss prospects for future development of the neighborhood.
- Aug. 1960 Following the workshop, the Albina Neighborhood Council became interested in getting an improvement program started. In August 1960, members of the Albina Neighborhood Council met with members of the Portland Development Commission. The Development Commission agreed to provide technical assistance to a citizens' committee in the Albina Neighborhood to explore the possibility of gaining funds from the Federal Government for an urban renewal conservation and rehabilitation program.
- Oct. 1960 The Council appointed Reverend Cortlandt Cambric as Chairman of a neighborhood improvement committee. He contacted various neighborhood organizations and property owners and in October, 1960, the eighteen-member Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee (ANIC) began holding meetings and gathering information about their neighborhood.
- Nov. 1960 On November 2, 1960, ANIC sponsored a general neighborhood meeting at the Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church. The purpose of the meeting was to present the idea of a coordinated improvement project to the residents of the neighborhood and to find whether they were interested and what problems they felt were most critical. As a result of the interest shown at this meeting, ANIC encouraged the Development Commission to discuss the possibility of an urban renewal conservation project with officials of the Federal Government.
- Dec. 1960 In December, 1960, officials of the Housing and Home Finance Agency from Washington, D. C. and San Francisco visited Portland, met with city officials and neighborhood leaders and reviewed the conditions. They felt that a successful program could be developed in the Albina Neighborhood.
- Jan. 1961 In January, 1961, the Committee members reviewed a proposal for a specific project area located between Fremont, Skidmore, Vancouver, and the alley between Albina and Mississippi Avenues. After a discussion of this area, they decided to gather additional information by talking to residents and asking the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) whether they would back home improvement loans if this area were to be selected as the first project area.

- <u>Feb. 1961</u> On February 7, 1961, ANIC organized a detailed inspection of five structures by members of the local FHA Staff. As a result of this survey, Mr. Oscar Pederson, Director of the local FHA office, reported that this area would qualify for FHA home improvement loans if it were to become an urban renewal project.
- <u>July 1961</u> As a result of the foregoing activities, the Development Commission staff began preparing an application for survey and planning funds which was reviewed by ANIC members on July 20, 1961. On July 26, the application was reviewed and approved by the Portland Development Commission and the City Planning Commission. As a result of favorable recommendation of these three bodies, the City Council approved the Survey and Planning Application for the Albina Neighborhood Improvement Project on August 3, 1961. The report was transmitted to the Federal Government and approval was granted by the Housing and Home Finance Agency on October 12.
- Oct. 1961 After receiving approval of the planning budget, the Development Commission leased and prepared the house at 3726 N. Kerby Avenue for use as the Albina Neighborhood Improvement Information Center (ANIIC). The Center has provided the neighborhood residents an opportunity for daily contact with survey and planning personnel and has provided space for many citizen meetings and activities.
- Citizen <u>Action</u> During the first year of activity, the Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee worked to help solve some of the individual problems mentioned during the general meeting in November, 1960. Because of the need for better street lighting, ANIC discussed the problems with the City Street Light Engineer and thereafter sponsored petitions for additional lights in the area bounded by Fremont, Russell, Williams and Union Avenues. With the cooperation and assistance of Commissioner Ormond Bean and the City Street Light Bureau, a plan was developed and 35 new lights were installed by Portland General Electric Company. ANIC then organized a work party to trim tree limbs which obstructed some of the lights. Through such organized effort, the Committee is continuing to work to solve other neighborhood problems.
- Block Another example of the effectiveness of cooperative citizen action Groups was the organization of Mrs. Joseph Crane's Block Group. The residents of the block bounded by Vancouver, Gantenbein, Failing and Beech Streets began holding block meetings to combat a rodent problem. After Mrs. Crane explained the interest of her Block Group at an ANIC meeting, the Committee contacted the Bureau of Health and gained the help of Mr. Jack Alderton, Sanitary Inspector. Because the Block Group found that it was just as important to remove rodent harborages as it was to kill the rodents, they organized a clean-up campaign. ANIC was able to get a truck donated, and the members of the Block Group cleaned out basements, garages and back yards and loaded the truck and swept the alley on September 23, 1961.

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Following the clean-up campaign, Mr. Alderton worked with the members of the Block Group to kill the rodents. Mrs. Bowles' Block Group has more recently held a successful clean-up campaign also.

General Neighborhood Meeting Following a year of activity under the fine leadership of Reverend Cambric, ANIC established bylaws and elected Reverend T. X. Graham and Father Mell Stead as Co-Chairmen. To review the progress of the program for residents of the neighborhood, ANIC sponsored the second general neighborhood meeting at Boise School on December 18, 1961. Mayor Schrunk, Commissioner Bean, members of the Development Commission and numerous city and federal officials attended and offered encouragement and support to the Committee and the neighborhood audience. ALBINA NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT



IV. REPORT ON PLANNING STAGE

A. CITIZEN ACTIVITIES

The past interest and support of the people who have participated in the development and planning of an improvement project in Albina Neighborhood has been the most important element of the program. It has been illustrated that joint effort by individual neighbors and cooperation by various community agencies can solve many of the more obvious problems such as littered yards, rodent control and street lighting.

Since the Information Center was established and began operation on November 1, 1961, many meetings have been held and activities accomplished:

Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee

Regular Monthly Meetings	7
Special Meetings	1
General Neighborhood Meeting	1
Coffee Sessions for Visiting Guests	2

Subcommittee Meetings

Planning Subcommittee	8
Street Light Subcommittee	1
(Petitions were circulated and	
320 signatures obtained from	
396 structures facing north-	
south streets in project area)	
Tree Program Subcommittee	3

Block Group Activity

33 Meetings (including 4 meetings of people in proposed park site)
5 Block Chairmen elected representing 7 blocks

- (Average Block Group attendance at Block Meetings has been 40%)
- 1 Block Clean-up Campaign (Block 13)

Information Center

Number of Mailings 64 Number of Pieces 7400 (including notices, agendas and minutes of ANIC and Block Group meetings, monthly news-bulletins and special mailings)

B. SURVEYS

All surveys were undertaken to gather information required by the Federal Government to determine whether the project area is eligible to receive local and Federal government money for carrying out the proposals in the improvement plan.

The outstanding cooperation received from the property owners and tenants in the project area is a credit to their individual interest in the program as well as the activities and accomplishments of the Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee during the past two years.

Explanation of all surveys was given at ANIC meetings prior to the start of the survey. Further information was available through many Block Group meetings or by a visit or telephone call to the Information Center staff. No survey or interview was made without first contacting the property owner or tenant to gain his permission and to set a convenient appointment.

Field work:

Structures Surveyed Cooperation

Nov. 4 - Dec. 9	Exterior Structure Survey (By City Building Bureau per- sonnel under contract with Development Commission.)	522	512	98%
Jan.13 - Mar.15	Interior Structure Survey (242 of 292 Dwelling Units)	253	201	79%
Jan. 9 - Mar.15	Financial Capability and Re- location Needs Survey (a. 260 of 292 Dwelling Units b. 13 additional surveys were conducted during Re- habilitation Feasibility Survey)	253	214	85%
Mar.23 – Jun. l	Acquisition Appraisal of Park Site Properties (By Laidlaw and Trowbridge)		-	100% barcel)
Jun.20 - Aug.19	Rehabilitation Feasibility Study (Appraisals by:Walstrom, Cost Estimates by: Curtis of Hoffard, Inc.)	62	45	73%











C. PLANNING ANALYSIS

Prior to filing for a survey and planning grant, the Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee interviewed 335 project area families to identify problems existent in the project area. The problems listed were as follows: traffic hazards; inadequate street lighting; insufficient street sweeping; inadequate tree and shrub trimming; need for rodent control; cleaning of vacant lots and alleys; and need for a park area.

Upon approval of the survey and planning funds by HHFA, the City Planning Commission was retained to review the deficiencies which had been noted by the project area residents, to identify any additional problems which were prevalent in the area, and to prepare a detailed comprehensive plan and program designed to enhance the residential environment of the project area. A five-member planning subcommittee of ANIC was appointed to review and offer suggestions on the surveys, analyses and planning proposals under consideration by the Planning Commission; also, this committee regularly reported its findings to the full committee.

Following is a resume of the planning proposals prepared by the Planning Commission and recommended for inclusion as part of the Urban Renewal Plan and program for the Albina project area.

Housing

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Housing development at a density of 2500 square feet per unit is the predominant land use recommended in the improvement plan for the project area (Project Proposals Figure 7).

The project today is mainly residential in character, containing 696 dwelling units mostly in one and two family structures, with the remainder in low density apartment development (Existing Land Use, Figure 2). It is estimated that when the project area is developed to capacity -- including legal conversion of one family to two family dwellings and the construction of new units on vacant land -- the area will number approximately 815 dwelling units.*

The basis for this housing use proposal, which represents a reaffirmation of the desirability of the existing pattern of residential development in the area, is Portland's long standing planning and zoning policy to maintain and support residential neighborhoods in close proximity to the central commercial area, thus affording people convenient access to major employment, shopping and recreation facilities.

The City's Comprehensive Development Plan and the Planning and Zoning Code** both substantiate this policy of preserving central area residential neighborhoods. The Comprehensive Development Plan designates the Boise School neighborhood, of which the project area is a part, as a residential district. Most of the project area is assigned a residential zoning classification (Project Zoning Figure 6) which has

been the case since original adoption of a zoning ordinance by the City in 1924.

The project area is in relatively close proximity to outstanding regional shopping and recreational facilities, including the Central Business District $(2\frac{1}{2} \text{ miles})$; the Lloyd Center (2 miles), a regional shopping center which contains and adjoins office buildings; and the Memorial Coliseum (1 mile), a metropolitan exposition and recreation facility. Also, the nearness to numerous community facilities (Community Facilities Figure 5), constitutes additional desirable attributes for residential development in the project area.

An essential element of an improvement program for the project area is the elimination of the major and minor housing deficiencies (Structural Condition Figure 3) which now exist. A successful endeavor to upgrade existing housing and encourage new residential construction, combined with the improvement and development of existing and needed local facilties described below, will be of lasting benefit to the residents of the project area, and should serve to stimulate other similar programs throughout the city.

- * Planning Commission dwelling unit analysis prepared for Land for Schools report, 1958
- ** Portland Comprehensive Development Plan adopted by the City Planning Commission, June 1958

Portland Planning and Zoning Code adopted by City Council, July 1959

2. Business Development

In addition to residential and park development, a recommendation for a small amount of business development at the extremities of the project is encompassed in the project proposals (Figure 7). This includes (1) a new bowling alley development within the existing business development along N. Mississippi Avenue and (2) commercial development along N. Vancouver Avenue near the intersection of N. Fremont Street. The proposed bowling alley development was reviewed by the Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee. Their recommendation that the impact on adjacent residential development be minimized was implemented by the provision of an M3 buffer zone designation on the bowling alley property, adjacent to residential development. The Vancouver-Fremont development, located at the intersection of two major traffic arterials, does not have an adverse impact on neighboring housing, but rather offers a possibility for development of commercial facilities convenient to the project area.

3. Project Zoning

The zoning recommended for the project (Figure 6) corresponds to the land uses proposed for the project area.

The A2.5 apartment residential presently designated for most of the project area is retained. In order to provide adequate protection to the project area, the following two changes in the existing pattern are recommended:

 a. Change the spot Al apartment zone (1000 square feet per dwelling unit) located at the southwest corner of the intersection of N. Beech Street and N. Haight Avenue to an A2.5 apartment zone.

This proposal is made to maintain a consistent pattern of zoning theoughout the project.

b. Change the zone classification for the area located 100 feet north of N. Shaver Street, 100 feet north of N. Fremont Street, the center line of the alley, or 108 feet west of N. Vancouver and the center line of the alley east of N. Vancouver from the existing C2 commercial zone district to an A2.5 (2500 sq. ft. per dwelling unit) Apartment Residential District.

The character of present development along N. Vancouver Avenue is predominantly residential. Vancouver Avenue, a project area boundary street, is a secondary traffic arterial serving as both a neighborhood collector and a through street. Its efficiency could be retarded by strip commercial development. Also, the project area could be adversely affected by bordering on a narrow fringe development which would attract truck and vehicle traffic extraneous to the residential area. Therefore, residential zoning on Vancouver Avenue is deemed more appropriate than commercial.

Property owners in the blocks included in the proposed Vancouver Avenue zone change originally requested a consideration for such action, and have indicated support for this proposal.

4. Traffic Circulation

The project proposals plan (Figure 7) calls for the construction of four landscaped traffic diverters for the purpose of directing through traffic either eminating from, or extraneous to, the project area on to the

traffic collector streets at the periphery of the project in order to insure a quiet, safe, livable residential district.

Such traffic control should reduce auto accidents now prevalent in the area. As indicated in the above mentioned opinion survey, residents of the project are concerned about the lack of traffic safety that the present gridiron street system affords; accordingly, the Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee has endorsed the concept of developing means for achieving a safer residential area.

Five alternate schemes for diverting through traffic were studied by the representatives of various city and local bureau and agencies concerned with street development, including the Portland Development Commission, Bureau of Traffic Engineering, Bureau of Fire, Office of City Engineer, Mass Transit and Public Works Coordinator, local FHA planning personnel, and the City Planning Commission. Of the various feasible alternates considered, the interior street system indicated in the proposed plan was selected as the most favorable.

The project area is bounded on all sides by secondary traffic thoroughfares. The Bureau of Public Works has prepared a tentative plan, for study only, for widening the north boundary street, N. Skidmore Street and N. Vancouver Avenue at the east extremity of the project in order to effect a system of major streets integrated with the interstate freeway, ramps, and bridges soon to be constructed in the vicinity of the project.

A comprehensive transportation plan for the Portland Metropolitan area is being prepared cooperatively by (city, county, metropolitan, and state) traffic, transit and urban planning personnel. This plan will be helpful in determining the need and location of major street improvements in the community.

As the proposed modification of the interior street system of the project area, described above, will reroute traffic now using the project streets as through routes, on to the collector streets at the periphery of the project, widening of the peripheral streets should be considered if future assigned design volumes being determined during the course of the preparation of the transportation plan indicates the need for greater arterial street capacity.

5. Project Park

A 4.5 acre park is recommended for development within the project area. The basis for this proposal is the City Park Bureau standard that residents of a housing area should have access to a neighborhood park facility within one-quarter of a mile of their home.

As pointed out in the opinion survey on project area problems, the residents of the project area lack convenient access to a neighborhood park facility. The neighboring Peninsula, Overlook, Irving, and Lillis-Albina parks are all considerably removed from the project area; also, several major traffic arterials isolate the project residents from these facilities (Community Facilities, Figure 5). The Boise School, which is contiguous to, and serves the project, lacks adequate playground space.

The lack of adequate recreation space for adults, as well as children, constitutes an environmental deficiency. Therefore, the development of a park facility, including facilities for small children, an active area for larger children, and a quiet area for adults, is an essential element of an improvement plan and program for the project area.

The recommendation for the precise location of the site was made jointly by the Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee's Planning Subcommittee and representatives of the various city agencies having an interest in such a development. These agencies were the Bureau of Parks, Portland Development Commission, Bureau of Traffic Engineering, Mass Transit Coordinator's Office, and City Engineer's Office. This group reviewed all possible considerations relating to the impact that a park development would have on the neighborhood and community. This analysis included: the allowable minimum size of a park; the costs of acquiring various alternate sites (five were studied); the number of housing deficiencies within alternate sites; the impact of the various alternate sites on internal and external traffic circulation, mass transit routes, and on overhead and underground utilities. Convenient and safe access to all users of the park and suitability for possible expansion to a full neighborhood park was also part of the analysis.

The recommended minimum size for a neighborhood park in the Portland area is ten acres. This standard was recently formulated by the Portland Metropolitan Planning Commission in cooperation with local city planning and park officials. The project area dwelling unit count, when fully developed, is estimated to be 815, or approximately 40% of the Boise School neighborhood, expected to number 2,060 dwelling units. The recommended 4.5 acre project park, which includes two project blocks and the proposed vacation of 400 feet of N. Commercial Avenue and two alleys, represents a facility in scale with the area and the number of residents to be served; also the proposed park is of sufficient size to contain the minimum amount of facilities to serve all age groups in the project area.

The park site, which has been selected, affords convenient and safe access to the project residents, does lend itself to possible expansion to a full neighborhood school-park* facility if such development were to be deemed necessary at a later date, and does not present any problems for traffic and bus circulation and existing and future utility improvements.

* See Public School Service below

6. School Service

The project area is served by the Humboldt Primary School (kindergarten through 4th grade), the Boise Elementary School (kindergarten through 8th grade), and the Jefferson High School. The Humboldt School provides kindergarten through 4th grade school service for the portion of the project area north of N. Failing Street, and the Boise School affords kindergarten through 4th grade school service for the remainder of the project and full elementary school service for the entire project.

The Humboldt School, constructed in 1959, was a development recommended in the Planning Commission's comprehensive school report LAND FOR SCHOOLS. It was proposed in this report that a full elementary school site and facility be developed to eliminate the school and site deficiencies of neighboring schools. This report did not proffer a specific recommendation for the Boise School, pending a possible urban renewal study which would include a detailed analysis as to site and building sufficiency.

The School District does plan, when funds are available, to expand the Humboldt primary site and facility into a full elementary school, according to the Planning Commission recommendation. The present primary school is overcrowded and two classrooms are now being constructed which will alleviate this condition.

The 33-classroom Boise School, though 36 years old, is a well maintained facility. However, the 3.69 acre school site is presently inadequate. The density ratio standard adopted by the Planning Commission and the School District for a two-story elementary school is 4.0 classrooms per acre; the Boise School measures 8.9, indicating a serious deficiency of space for playground activities and the parking of staff automobiles.

An analysis of enrollment at saturation, when the school's service area is fully developed and attendance boundaries are revised to effect safe transit to school, indicates that the Boise facility could be reduced to a 20-classroom facility which would require a five acre site to meet local standards. Therefore, the site should still be increased by at least 1.3 acres to afford optimum space for school recreation.

The location of the Boise School (Figure 5), contiguous to the impending freeway comples, calls for consideration of this school's relocation. A location in the center of the project, adjacent to a neighborhood park would be most appropriate; however, owing to the good quality of the present structure, relocation would not be feasible until the building becomes structurally or functionally obsolete. It is assumed that the present plant will continue in service for 15 or 20 years.

The School District has acquired a parcel of land including a vacated street, measuring 0.35 acres adjacent to the school for off-street parking space for the staff. The Planning Commission also urges that additional adjacent land be acquired when funds are available to alleviate the play-ground deficiency.

7. Streets, Curbs, Sidewalks and Alleys

The City Engineer's office has conducted a comprehensive survey of the adequacy of the streets, curbs, sidewalks and alleys in the project.

These facilities were checked against established city standards. A number of deficiencies were noted, including inadequate street surface and subsurface, high street crowns, high curbs, broken curbs, damaged sidewalks, and unimproved alleys.

The recommended improvement plan for the project area includes the elimination of these deficiencies by new construction, repairs and the paving of those alleys which are not now improved.

8. Project Utilities

Water

Water service to all housing units in the project area is adequate to serve present and future requirements. The Water Bureau recently completed a construction program to improve water distribution facilities in North Portland. A new water tank recently developed, as part of this program, has upgraded the service to the project area and adequate pressure is now available at all times.

Sewer

The City Engineer's office has analyzed the sewer service now provided in the project and has rendered the opinion that these project facilities are adequate to service present and future requirements.

Power

The two utility companies which serve the project area, Portland General Electric and Pacific Power and Light, have been consulted to determine the adequacy of present service and any future plans for development in the project area. Present service is adequate. The Pacific Power and Light Company plans to reroute main distribution lines, presently located in the project, owing to disruption of the present system by the Interstate Freeway development. It is recommended that, when possible, main distribution lines be relocated along major traffic thoroughfares at the project area's periphery rather than on residential streets within the project.

9. Street Lighting

The street lighting in the project area has, in the past, been inadequate. The voters of Portland have made funds available for the installation and conversion of luminaires in districts where residents indicated a desire to upgrade neighborhood street lighting. The Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee has sponsored a petition drive to acquire signatures for better street lighting in the project area. Through their efforts, a new street lighting program is soon to be completed which includes 30 new luminaires and 31 conversions.

10. Street Trees

The project area contains tree stumps and street trees, most of which are oversized and cause curb and sidewalk breakage. A program to repair the curbs and sidewalks will include the removal of stumps and oversized trees. The utility companies serving the area are interested in a tree removal and planting program which will be compatible with the power lines. A joint committee of residents of the project area and the power companies, and other civic groups, has been formed to carry out such a program. The utility companies are also undertaking a program of modernizing their integrated wiring system.

Boise School Freiser Boundary Freeway Ramps

- - LAND USE APARTMENT RESIDENTIAL
- LIGHT MANUFACTURING PROJECT PARK

STREETS AND ALLEYS SHAPING AND RESURFACING NO IMPROVEMENT REQUIRED SEWER, WATER, AND GAS EASEMENTS ALBINA NEIGHBORHOOD

FIGURE

PROJECT

PORTLAND, OREGON

PORTLAND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION CITY OF PORTLAND MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON PREPARED BY PORTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

V. IMPROVEMENT COSTS

Proposed improvements within Albina Neighborhood Improvement Project:

Traffic Diverters	\$ 9,866
Street Paving	96,308
Curbs and Sidewalks	39,985
Alley Paving	105,379
Park Development	346,478
Improvement Cost	\$598,016

Proposed cost to project:

Traffic Diverters	\$ 9,866
Park Development	346,478
Project Improvement Cost	\$356,344

Proposed cost to property owners:

Street Paving	\$ 96,308
Curbs and Sidewalks	39,985
Alley Paving	105,379

Property Owners' Improvement Cost \$241,672

It is recommended that a special assessment district be formed to pay the cost of improvements for street paving, alley paving and repair of curbs and sidewalks. A formula for such a district could provide for equal payment for all improvements per front foot with property owners who face north-south streets paying only only for footage on the north-south street.

Note:

A final Project Budget (including the cost of providing rehabilitation counseling to project residents, the cost of land acquisition, the cost of project improvements and other related costs) will be completed as soon as the final report of Rehabilitation Feasibility is turned in to the Portland Development Commission.

ACTION REQUESTED FROM GROUPS REVIEWING REPORT

September 4	Urban Renewal Committee, City Planning Commission
	Review of survey results and other preliminary staff proposals
	Review of contract responsibilities
	Approval of Planning Analysis (Item C, this report)
September 4	Portland Development Commission
	Review of survey results and preliminary staff proposals

September 6 Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee

Review of survey results and consideration and/or approval of project proposals