



# Envisioning a Reconnected Albina: A Kickoff Celebration!—What we heard.

## Reconnecting Albina Planning Project (RAPP)

February 2025



THE BUREAU OF  
**PLANNING &  
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# Executive Summary

## Envisioning a Reconnected Albina: a Kickoff Celebration!

In late February of 2025, the Reconnecting Albina Planning Project (RAPP) hosted the Envisioning a Reconnected Albina: A Kickoff Celebration at Harriet Tubman Middle School. It was a lively event with over 200 in attendance, bringing together community members, leaders, partners, advocates, and local organizations.

### Event stations: explore and engage

The community explored project elements and the work to date at three main stations organized around the following themes: Public Spaces, Development, and Movement. The event materials for Public Spaces, Development and Movement display boards were developed with the support of ZGF Architects. Each station provided a chance for direct dialogue with project partners. We also invited attendees to participate at an interactive feedback station to offer their thoughts, issues, opportunities across the district.

### Community voices: what you shared!

Throughout the event, we heard powerful reflections on the neighborhood's history, past harms and displacement impacts, and the community's vision for the future. A few things the community emphasized:

- A strong desire for Albina to become a walkable, vibrant, and inclusive mixed-use neighborhood.
- Reconnect displaced community and increase neighborhood affordability.
- Increase community serving opportunities
- Wealth-building and ownership opportunities
- Prioritize livability by focusing on safety, connectivity and accessibility.

### **“Preserve the remaining cultural and historical sites that reflect Black past and resilience.” - Event Participant**

The following report highlights what RAPP heard from those who attended the event and what community members shared with the project team during the event at the different stations.



# Community Engagement

## Collecting Community Input

The event provided interactive opportunities for community feedback. This feedback will be used to inform the next steps of the project. **Here's how we did it at the feedback station:**

### NOTE YOUR THOUGHTS ACTIVITY

Community could write feedback on sticky notes or on precedent images from other cities to spark ideas for the district.

### A PLANT IT FLAG ACTIVITY

Event participants could write their feedback on flags and add flags to a location of their choice on a printed project map. The "Flags" were about the size of a post it.

The different flag colors represented themes:

- **Development**
- **Public Spaces**
- **Movement**
- **Big Picture**

Event participants used those themes to organize their comments for the various subareas within the project boundary.

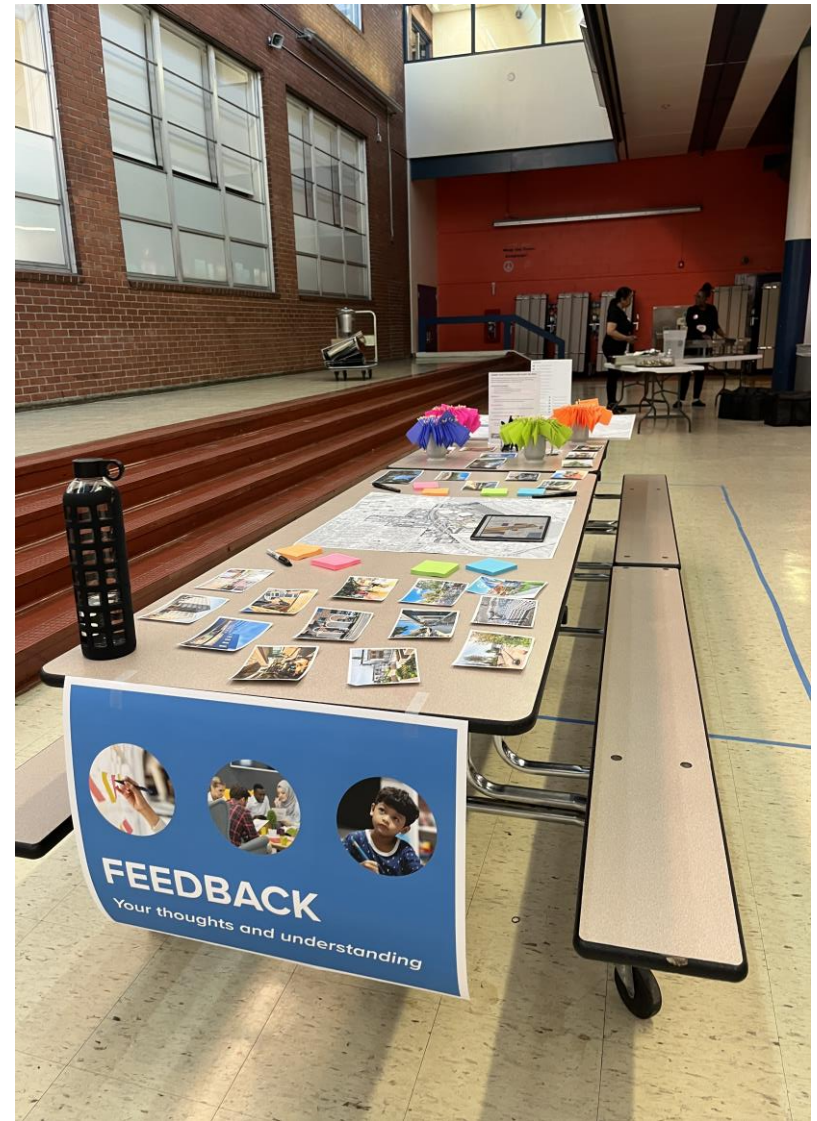


Figure 1. Image of the Feedback Station at the Kickoff Event





# Prompting the Discussion

## SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS AND PLANT AN IDEA!

**Activity participants were promoted to:** Tell us what makes this area unique and what you hope to see as it develops into a reconnected community. Consider the following themes and questions as you create your flag:

- **Development:** Where are the key community spaces and opportunities for growth?
- **Public Spaces:** Where are the opportunities for new open spaces?
- **Movement:** How can the functionality of streets reconnect people and places in this area? (i.e. main streets vs. quieter local streets)
- **Big Picture:** What functions do these subareas serve in the district? (i.e. Are housing or commercial uses better? Both?)

## Community Response

### HOW MANY COMMENTS DID WE GET?

**48 total comments**—were recorded at the feedback activity station.

**Table 1. Input Collected at Feedback Station.** shows an overview of the amount of community input we received organized by themes through the **Plant it Flag Activity** and the **Note Your Thoughts Activity**.



Image 1. Input at the Feedback Station.

### PLANT IT FLAG | NOTE YOUR THOUGHTS

Description: Feedback station map of community flags with input categorized by the different themes, and on precedent images used to collect input.

Table 1. Input Collected at Feedback Station.

THEME	ACTIVITY COMMENTS		
	Flag	Notes*	All
Development	13	5	19
Public Spaces	10	7	17
Movement	5	2	7
Big Picture	4	2	6
TOTAL	32	16	48

\*Notes: Staff categorized the associated themes to the written notes participants provided at the feedback station through the Note Your Thoughts Activity.

# Areas of Interest

## ACTIVITY COMMENTS: SUBAREAS

Several of the comments connected specifically to one of the project's subareas (Figure 2.). Below are the themes that were used to provide input within those areas:

Table 2. Activity Table Input by Subarea.

### Key:

- **Development (D)**
- **Public Spaces (PS)**
- **Movement (M)**
- **Big Picture (BP)**
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SUBAREA	THEME				
	D	PS	M	BP	All
A: I5RQ Improvement Project	4	-	1	1	6
B: Broadway/Weidler East	3	1	1	1	6
C: Rose Quarter Parking Sites	1	3	-	-	4
D: Dr. Matthew Prophet Master Plan	2	-	1	2	5
E: North of Broadway Sites	-	-	-	-	-
F: Larrabee Open Space	-	-	-	-	-
G: Albina Waterfront Sites	1	4	1	-	6
H: Rose Quarter Transit Center	-	-	-	-	-
General Project Area	7	9	3	2	21
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>48</b>

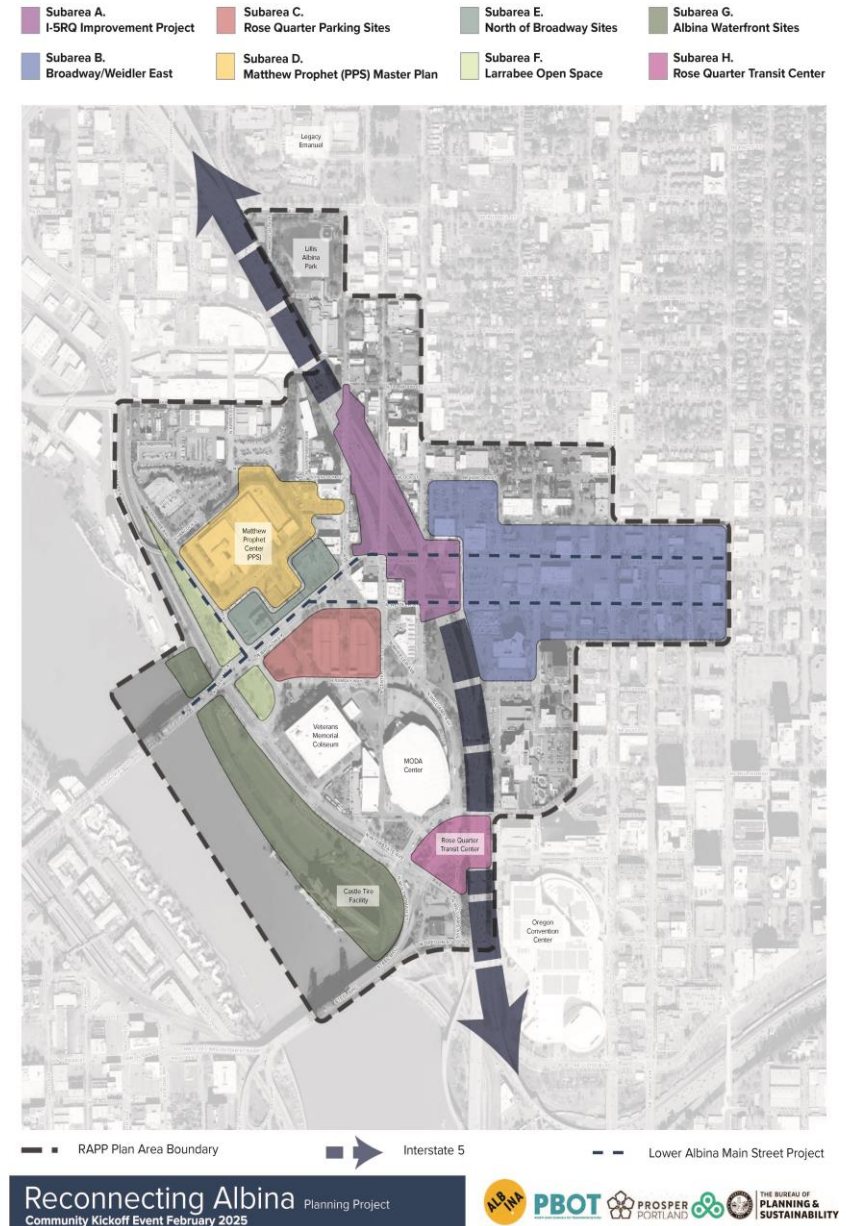


Figure 2. Map of RAPP Subareas used for Activities at the Feedback Stations



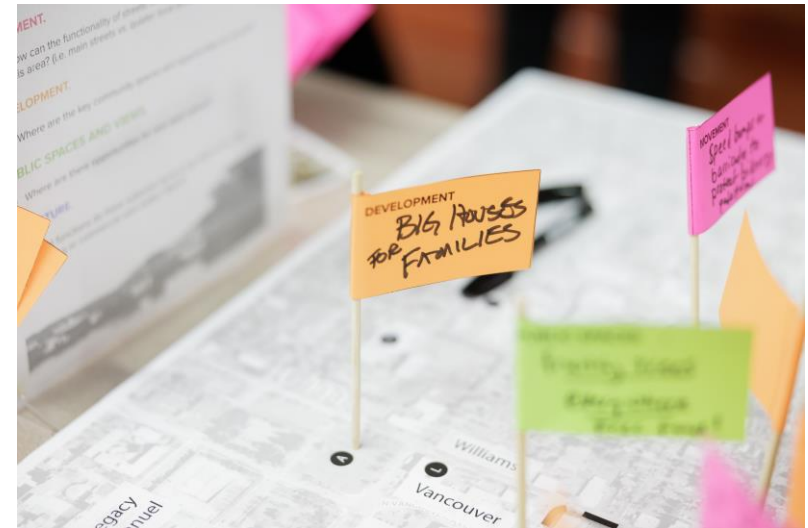
## ACTIVITY COMMENTS: THEMES

Based on the themes used by activity participants to share their thoughts, a few takeaways are:

- Most comments were related to: **Development (18)** and **Public Spaces (17)**.
- Participants were least interested in using the **Big Picture (6)** theme.
- **Movement (7)** was not a priority theme for participants at the feedback station. Yet was key topic of conversation discussed throughout the various event stations.
- Subarea **E: N of Broadway Sites**, **F: Larrabee Open Space**, and **H: Rose Quarter Transit Center** did not receive any comments.

### A few subthemes came out of the comments made for Development, Public Spaces, Movement, and Big Picture: **Development**

- **Subarea A. I5RQIP** was the subarea with the most comments that related to development, comments highlighted support for capping I-5 but opposition to freeway expansion. Desire for a sports field for kids and full spectrum of businesses on the future cover.
- Ideas for new community assets like small retail spaces, makerspaces, and night time activities.
- Desire for more housing, accessible garbage cans, affordable food, and considerations for future development were noted among several of the comments.
- Several comments emphasized the importances of preserving or enhancing the cultural and historical significance of the neighborhood.



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***“Cap the freeway! But do not expand.”***

***“Small retail between parking garages and the street.”***

***“Preserve the remaining cultural and historical sites that reflect Black past and resilience!”***

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## Public Spaces

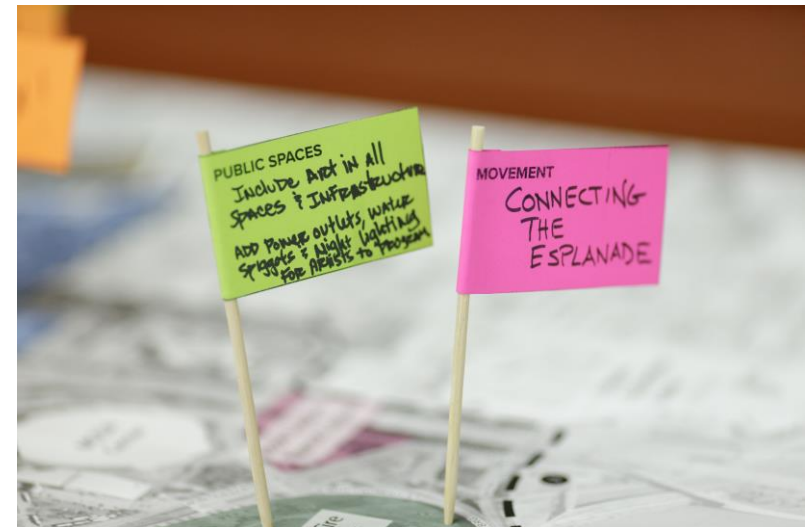
- Strong emphasis on historical and cultural preservation, particularly regarding Black heritage and resilience.
- Desire for artistic and functional public spaces, including creative lighting, public art, and infrastructure for artists.
- Most comments highlighted the need for more trees, greening, shade, and natural areas.
- Comments highlighted the desire for community spaces and programming like a Saturday market or neighborhood walks.

## Movement

- There is strong opposition to freeway expansion but support for a freeway cap with community-serving uses.
- Desire for safer pedestrian and bike crossings, protected crossings, speed bumps, and barricade improvements to local mobility and
- Enhancing connectivity between Lower Albina the waterfront, to the Esplanade, and existing community places like Matt Dishman Community Center.

## Big Picture

- Desire for expanded youth engagement, community-building initiatives, and historical education.
- Equity in housing (diverse housing options), business opportunities, places to play, and increase green space are key priorities.
- Interest in connecting temporary housing residents to permanent homes.



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***"Include art in all spaces and infrastructure."***

***"Saturday market."***

***Develop more neighborhood greenways in and around the Albina neighborhood. Commitment to other forms of transportation.***

***Will there also be homes and townhomes built for citizens to purchase?"***

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# Conversations and Discussions

## WHAT WE HEARD AT THE STATIONS

Here is what we heard at the three main stations during the Kickoff Event:

### Development

#### General Feedback

- A desire to keep people in the community and ensure development is community serving. A lot of excitement for the future of the district.

#### Concerns

- Type of development being proposed on the future I-5 Highway Cover in **Subarea A. I5RQIP** commenting that the development appeared flashy or for high income individuals.
- Gentrification in North/Northeast Portland.

#### Questions

- The future I-5 Highway Cover in **Subarea A. I5RQIP**, what's going to happen and when. What the phasing is going to be?
  - Where did the context for the cover came from?
  - Will there be more opportunities to give input?

### Public Spaces

#### General Feedback

Excitement about enhancing, improving, and creating new public spaces in the district:





- **Subarea F. Larrabee Open Space:** Participants mostly agreed the proposed Larrabee Waterfront concept is an opportunity to create an important connection the Dr. Matthew Prophet (PPS) site.
- **Subarea G. Albina Waterfront Site:** Event guests noted interest to continue to learn and be involved in the exploration of the site's development for the future. As well as a desire for an active waterfront in this part of the city.
- Community participants generally highlighted that they would like to see the grain terminal gone.

### Concerns

- Skepticism about the future of open space in the district was shared by guests at this station, notably the skepticism associated to the financial feasibility and funding of open space.
- Participants conveyed that a major barrier to development and activation of the Albina Waterfront area are the Union Pacific railroad tracks.

Collective concerns about the safety implications to pedestrian and cyclist around open spaces associated to the I-5 Rose Quarter circulation and interchanges.

- Lack of existing public and open green spaces in the district.
- Parking and access in the district are an existing challenge and a concern for meeting the needs of the growing district.

### Questions

- **Subarea B: Broadway/Weidler East**
  - An expressed interest to learn more about what the impacts are for different modes of transportation and to those already living or working in the area.



### HOW CAN TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT IN THE DISTRICT?

#### Larrabee Waterfront Public Open Space

A major reimagining of N Larrabee Ave affords the City of Portland the opportunity to potentially provide a new public open space serving nearby redevelopment in Lower Albina.



#### Programming & Activation



Reconnecting Albina Planning Project  
Community Kickoff Event February 2025



- How will the neighborhood change? Will there be changes in character or changing in how people move around?

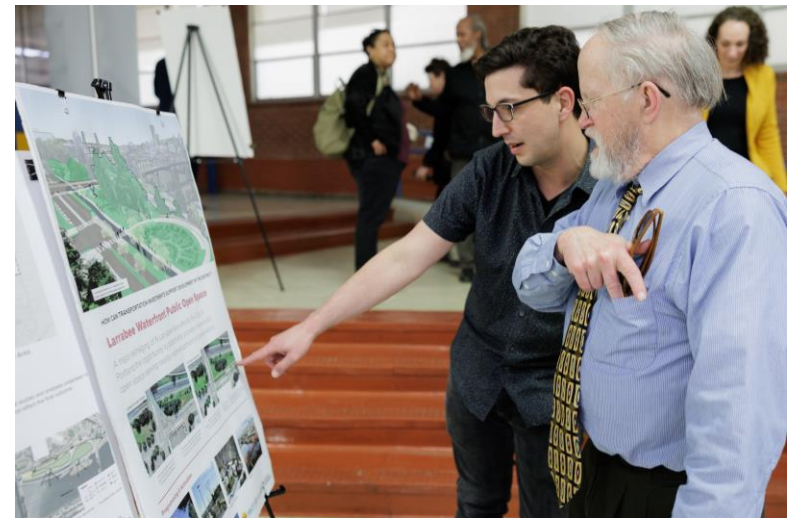
- **Subarea F. Larrabee Open Space**

- Overall, participants at this station expressed interest in the future activities on the site and how different elements would activate the space.
- How will this area be served by public transportation for an improved East/West connection and service.

- **Subarea G. Albina Waterfront Site**

- Is the City of Portland talking to Union Pacific about the railroad tracks, what would it take for them to move, if it's possible?
- Why isn't the City of Portland exploring purchasing the grain silos?
- There was interest in learning more about the types of design interventions such as wayfinding, signs, and other public realm improvements that were possible. To better connect the existing and future open space network and community serving anchors like Lillis Albina Park, Albina One, Matt Dishman Community Center and other community spaces.

Participants expressed interest in understanding the different open space network elements proposed, the timeline of those projects, funding, and partnerships driving those efforts.



## Movement

### General Feedback

- Overall excitement and interest about:

- City of Portland and Albina Vision Trust partnership.
  - The Clackamas Crossing and improved connections in the district.
  - Development as it responds to the transportation improvements in the district.
  - Complexity of the project and related efforts in the district.
- **Subarea A: I5RQIP**
    - At this station, most participants expressed interest on the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project.
    - The project was a main topic of interest in discussion a potential for a re-established grid in the district across the highway cover.
    - Overall, participants interactions on the I5RQIP were positive and expressed support for improving safety, connections, and access for all.
    - Desire to better understand the design and network elements of the proposed Clackamas Crossing: Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge.
  - **Subarea C: Rose Quarter Parking Sites**
    - Several participants were unaware that the parking garage sites could be redeveloped. There was a significant interest in how these sites could be used for more than parking to be more community serving.





## Concerns

- Parking in the district being able to respond to the influx of development occurring.
- Feasibility of the I5RQIP being completely built.
- Funding of transportation projects.
- Safety in the district for pedestrians, cyclists, and other active modes of transportation.

## Questions

- **Subarea A: I5RQIP**
  - Several participants at this station wanted to know about the location of the new freeway off and on ramps.
  - General project questions related to impact, funding, financing, process, and project scale.
  - Several questions were to better understand to highway cover and where to learn more or find additional information.
  - Guest would request clarification at this station about how the RAPP is connected to the I5RQIP.
- **Subarea C: Rose Quarter Parking Sites**
  - Participants wanted to learn more about the opportunities possible for future development, interrelated projects, partnerships, funding, and the RAPP scope of work for this subarea.
  - There was a high degree of attention on parking and learning more about a broader parking strategy for the district.
  - If RAPP was exploring demolishing the parking garages, where would parking be, and if the project was exploring simply keeping the garages.



# Contact

Valeria Tapia

City Planner II | NE District Liaison

[email@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:email@portlandoregon.gov)

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<http://portland.gov/bps>

503-823-7700

[bps@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:bps@portlandoregon.gov)