

# FREMONT BRIDGEHEAD RECLAMATION PROJECT

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## STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN



June 2023



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### ***Community-Based Organizations***

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- Albina Vision Trust
- North by Northeast - Sharetta Butcher Watson
- Sunrise Movement PDX
- Freeway Fighters
- Colloqate
- Portland Harbor Community Coalition
- We All Rise
- Proud Ground - Victor Caesar and Katie Ulrich
- Placemaking US - Ryan Smolar and Madeline Spencer

## **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The City of Portland occupies the ancestral lands of the Multnomah, Wasco, Cowlitz, Kathlamet, Bands of Chinook, Tualatin, Molalla, Kalapuya and Clackamas peoples. Tribal members are represented by the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians and the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde. We also celebrate the presence of the Urban Indigenous population and the Native diaspora living in the greater Portland area. We honor the Indigenous communities – past, present and future– who hold connection to this Land. We also acknowledge the historic and perpetuated harms inflicted by systemic policies of genocide, imposed assimilation and forced removal of Indigenous Peoples of this territory.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>00. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>01. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>02. COMMUNITY CONTEXT</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>03. PLANNING CONTEXT</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>04. PROJECT SITE ANALYSIS</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>05. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</b> .....	<b>42</b>
<b>06. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK</b> .....	<b>50</b>
<b>07. CASE STUDIES</b> .....	<b>52</b>
<b>08. RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	<b>59</b>
<b>09. CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>77</b>
<b>10. APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>78</b>
<b>11. REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>83</b>



# 00.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fremont Bridgehead Reclamation Project is a graduate-student-led workshop project for the Master of Urban and Regional Planning program at Portland State University in collaboration with the Eliot Neighborhood Association. Our project centers around the I-405 North Kerby Avenue Freeway ramps on the east Fremont Bridgehead. The ramps are located on the edges of the Boise and Eliot neighborhoods in inner North/Northeast Portland, creating a physical division and a reminder of the past and current harms inflicted on the community.

The plan is guided by the desire to return the land around the Fremont Bridgehead to community-oriented uses and provide opportunities for restitution for current and former residents who were harmed by the historic planning practices in the area. The result is a continuous strategic action and advocacy plan to achieve this desire.

## THE PROCESS

The first step of the planning process was to understand the history and context of the area. As outsiders to the community, this step was important for our team to understand not only how the ramps were created, but also the harm that they caused in the process. Additionally, we performed a site analysis to better understand the existing conditions of the area including the land uses, transportation systems, opportunities, constraints, and community assets. We used these existing conditions as well as previously expressed community goals and visions to develop a framework to evaluate the potential alternatives and recommendations identified through our first round of engagement. We then narrowed these recommendations down initially based on the results of the evaluation and then by reviewing them with community stakeholders to rank their priority.

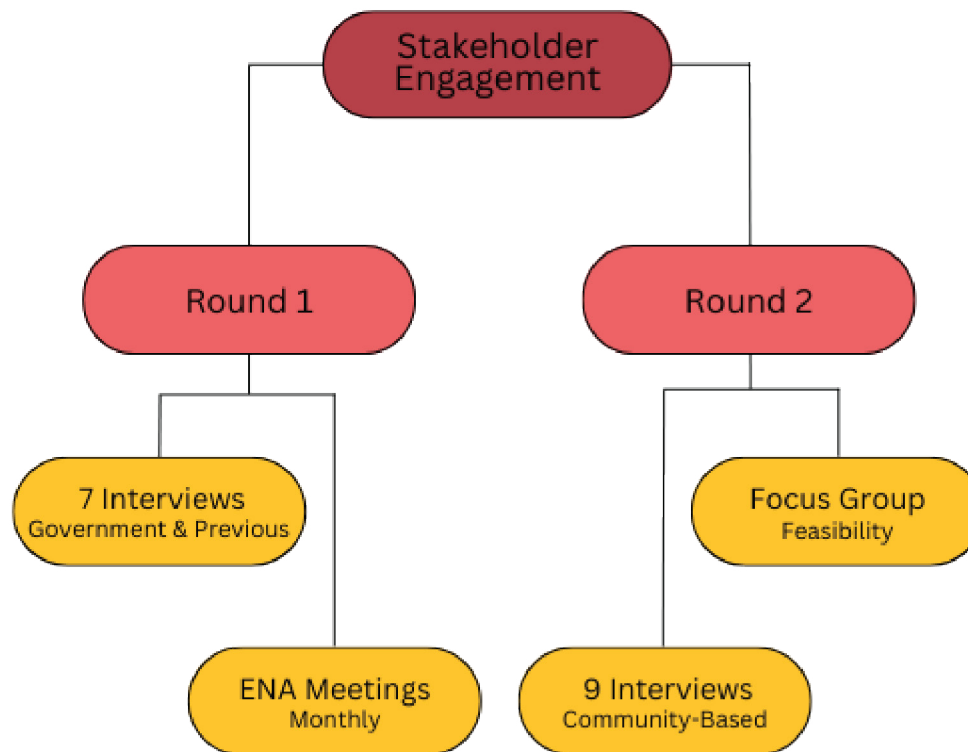
## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholder engagement took place between March and June 2023. Due to the short timeframe of the planning team's involvement, engagement focused on key stakeholders in government agencies and community-based organizations. Engagement efforts were guided by the following goals:

- Build relationships and identify project partners
- Explore feasibility of changes to ramps and redevelopment
- Understand the strengths and challenges in the neighborhood
- Identify community goals and priorities



Figure 2. Stakeholder Engagement



Ongoing community engagement will be essential for this project. However, the team heard from many different people that the Eliot community has been overwhelmed with engagement requests in recent years, leading to “engagement fatigue.” Many people noted that the true source of fatigue is the community’s participation without seeing their suggestions realized. With this in mind, the team decided to turn to key stakeholders and outline recommendations for future engagement.

Through stakeholder engagement, the team gathered a lot of information that informed the project and our recommendations. Although the final report goes into greater detail, the following are some key takeaways:

- **Extensive participation and community-led processes are critical**
- **Develop a strong community vision to guide the project**
- **There are a lot of potential allies in the community**

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The final recommendations assume a reconfiguration or removal of the ramps in order to free up land for community-oriented uses. Each recommendation prioritizes opportunities for restitution and wealth generation opportunities for those who were displaced by the original construction. In order to make these recommendations achievable, they were broken down into discrete actions with potential partners identified.

**The immediate term recommendations aim to build capacity and momentum for the project.** Community support and choosing a coalition for the longevity and sustainability of the project is an essential first step in making the project a priority for government agencies. Specific recommendations include:

- Create steering or advisory committee to guide project progression
- Continue and expand community engagement
- Build a coalition of support
- Identify potential funding opportunities

**In the medium term, securing funding and more intensive community engagement are necessary steps.** Ramp removal and redevelopment at this scale are very expensive and planning-intensive. The team will need to seek funding from a variety of sources during every stage of the project. They will need to build organizational capacity in order to execute grants, and ensure that community-oriented goals stay centered over the life of the project.

**The long term recommendations focus on redevelopment possibilities after the ramps have been removed.** The recommendations were pulled from the compilation of a technical data analysis and feedback solicited throughout the engagement process. Though more in-depth engagement will unveil the needs of the community, some long-term recommendations that may serve to guide the visioning process may include:

- Create a community land trust to make homeownership more affordable
- Create a community investment trust to make wealth generation more accessible
- Create a climate resilience hub with regular programming and a Black history museum





# 01. INTRODUCTION

The Fremont Bridgehead Reclamation Project is an advocacy initiative of the Eliot Neighborhood Association (ENA), with support from a graduate-student team from the Master of Urban and Regional Planning program at Portland State University. The plan is guided by the desire to return the land around the Fremont Bridgehead and N Kerby Avenue ramps to community-oriented uses and provide the opportunity for restitution for those who were displaced by the construction of the bridgehead.

In the 1970's, at the height of urban renewal and new freeway projects, the Prescott Freeway was intended to run through North/Northeast Portland and the Eliot neighborhood. Hundreds of

homes, businesses, and cultural hubs were demolished and thousands of predominantly Black homeowners<sup>1</sup>, business owners, and residents were displaced to build the bridgehead and new freeway. The Prescott Freeway was never completed, but the damage was already done, and the N Kerby Avenue highway ramps still occupy the space.

As it currently stands, the ramps occupy a disproportionate amount of land relative to their present day use. The Eliot Neighborhood Association, alongside the support of other community partners and organizations, hopes to reverse the damage perpetuated through this generational project.

# PROJECT PURPOSE AND VISION

This portion of the Fremont Bridgehead Reclamation Project is intended to serve as an exploratory analysis assessing the technical, environmental, and political support as well as the feasibility of transforming the land occupied by the N Kerby Avenue ramps back to community-oriented uses.

It is focused around the advocacy and redevelopment recommendations of the N Kerby Avenue freeway ramps and the reclamation of the surrounding land with the hopes of providing restitution for displaced community members. In a new age of reckoning with the public sector’s role in the destruction of BIPOC wealth and neighborhood connectivity, the push for freeway removal and reconnecting communities emerges and provides opportunity to families harmed by past discriminatory actions.



*Black Business Owners, Alberta Commons (Travel Oregon)*

The ramps serve as a continuous physical and emotional reminder of these actions and removing them, though it will happen in later stages, is a critical step to healing this community. Our vision for the project is summarized as:

***A reconnected neighborhood transformed by new, multimodal right of way connections between Eliot and Boise, and with amenities that serves and celebrates community members and meets neighborhood desires - fostering cultural vitality, economic development, environmental justice, and Black brilliance.***



*Rendering for Rocchester Inner Loop Freeway Project, (Bergmann)*

## GOALS

The vision for the project area was developed based on the goals expressed by the Eliot Neighborhood Association in their proposal for this project and the previously expressed community goals identified through review of planning and community visioning efforts.

Central to achieving this vision and in creating a path from desire to action include:

- Transforming urban space dedicated to automobiles and highway travel into a space that feels safe, accessible, and redesigned as a grid, bringing back the connectivity that the neighborhood remembers.
- Providing restitution to communities that were displaced by Urban Renewal projects such as the development of the Fremont Bridge, I-5, and Legacy Emanuel Hospital.
- Intentionally leveraging policy and programmatic tools that benefit displaced folks and provide opportunities to reconnect with Eliot

These goals were developed based on review of the community goals summarized below:

- The Eliot Neighborhood Plan (1993) focused on fostering a diverse community, culturally-vibrant and economically-vital, historic conservation and neighborhood-scale development, housing availability, transportation access, employment opportunity through economic development, access to parks and open space, and public safety.
- The Portland Plan (2012) is focused on four key goals: equity, thriving and educated youth, economic prosperity and affordability, and a healthy, connected city.
- The People's Plan (2017) provides a vision for a thriving Black community in the Portland Metro region and identifies goals around community resilience, health equality, housing justice, revitalization of the Black community's economic development, environmental justice, thriving Black youth, arts and culture spaces that support Black brilliance, and dismantling racist justice systems to build a restorative model.
- The Portland Comprehensive Plan (2018) has five guiding principles including economic prosperity, human health, environmental health, equity, and resilience.
- The Right 2 Root (2022) has worked towards focusing on a community-based and ground-truthed vision for their community projects, emphasizing the needs for the makers of the community to be involved and their voices heard.

# PROJECT SITE AREA

The project site area for the Fremont Bridgehead Reclamation Project spans two neighborhoods, Eliot and Boise, which were originally connected, but divided by the creation of the ramps. The redevelopment area is centered around the N Kerby Avenue I-405 on- and off-ramps, and their removal, but spans outward to the surrounding land parcels that would benefit from additional amenities, cultural revival, or travel to the neighborhood.

Figure 3. Project Site Area

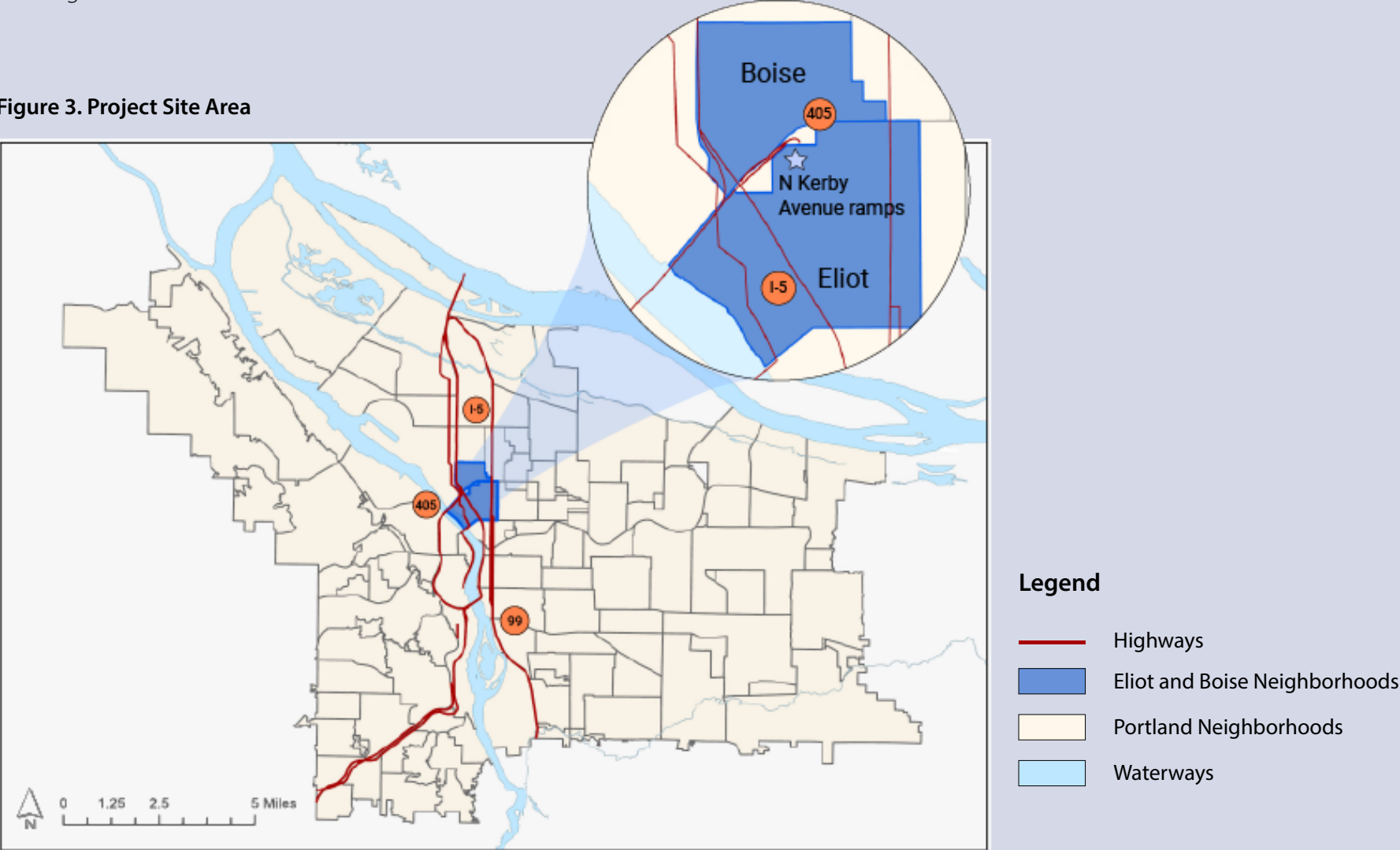


Figure 4. Project Parcels



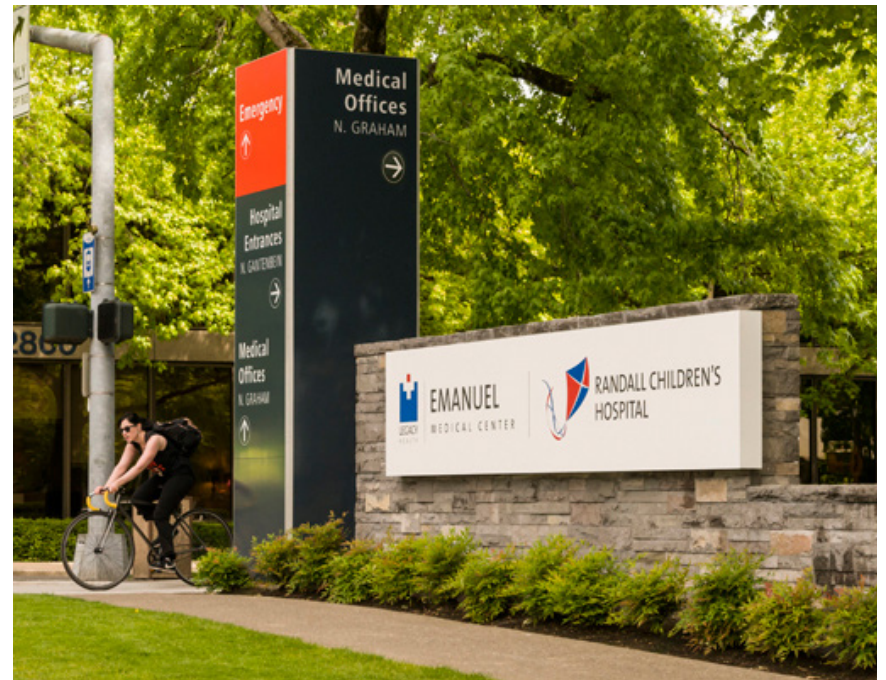
This area has valuable community assets that support residents, such as Denorval Unthank City, Lillis Albina, and Dawson Parks; the Boise-Eliot Elementary school (which many families have attended for generations); revered places of worship, like the Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church; Matt Dishman Community Center; a myriad of headquarters for community-based organizations like the Urban League and North by Northeast; the Multnomah County Library; and the N Mississippi Avenue and NE Martin Luther King Blvd historic districts. Another notable feature of the project area includes an additional significant commercial corridor - Williams/Vancouver.

This site also includes institutional and private land uses such as Legacy Emanuel Hospital and the American Red Cross. Legacy Emanuel Hospital was another site of urban renewal in the 1970's, as the hospital wanted to expand and forcibly removed over 170 households, of which 75% of the Black residents were homeowners.<sup>1</sup>

Surface parking for these institutions are examples of land uses that does not meet the highest and best use for the area. Public facilities located to the north and south of the ramps also include the main Albina Yard and PBOT Maintenance Facilities. These facilities serve as critical infrastructure and provide service capacity for the entire city, but have an outsized presence in the area. The centralized location of these facilities is a strength from the City's perspective, but a challenge for reclamation efforts. Other notable features of the project area include two significant commercial corridors (Williams/Vancouver to the east and Mississippi to the west), and two Portland Public Schools facilities (Boise-Eliot Elementary School and Harriet Tubman Middle School).

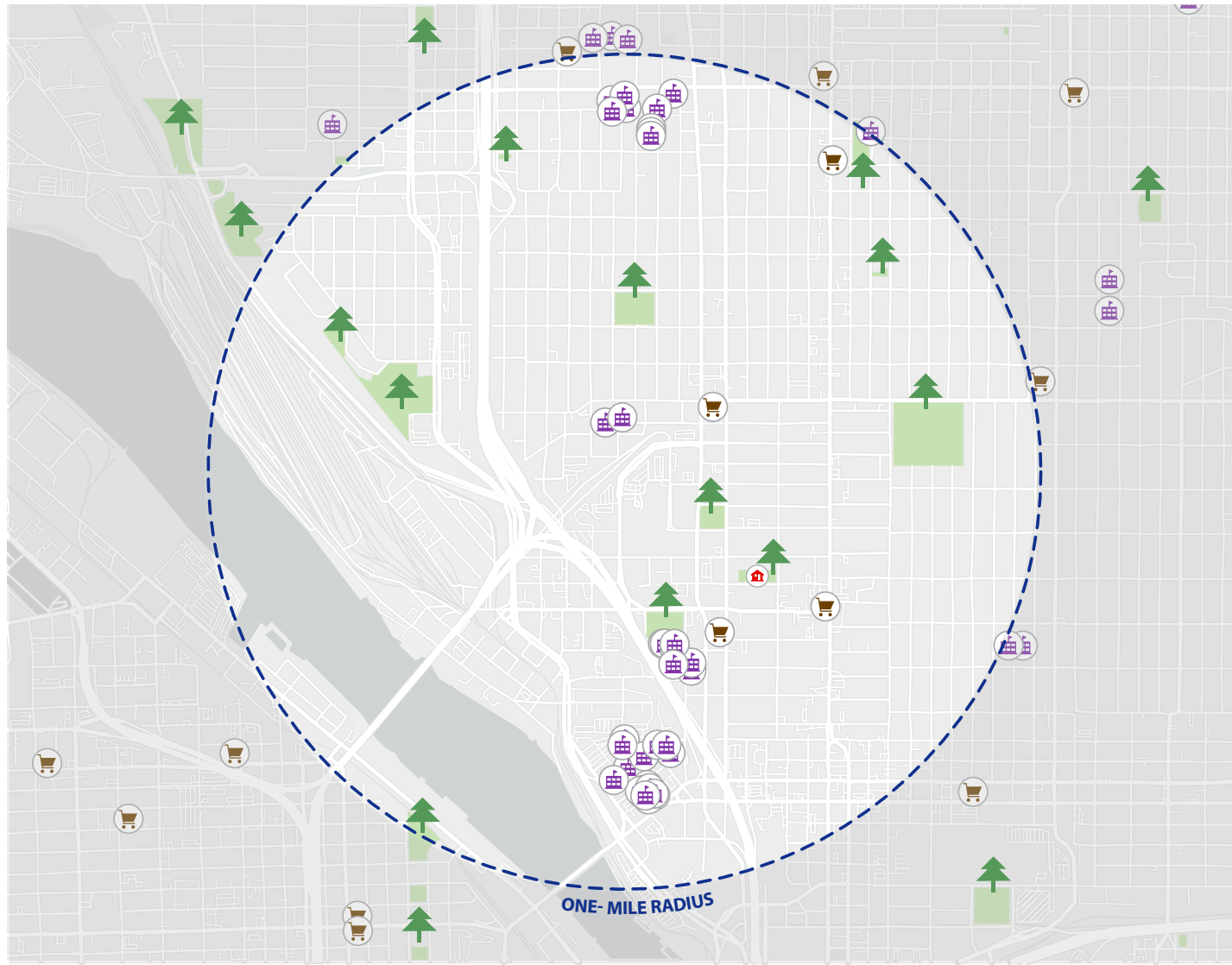


*Boise-Eliot Elementary (Oregon Public Broadcasting)*



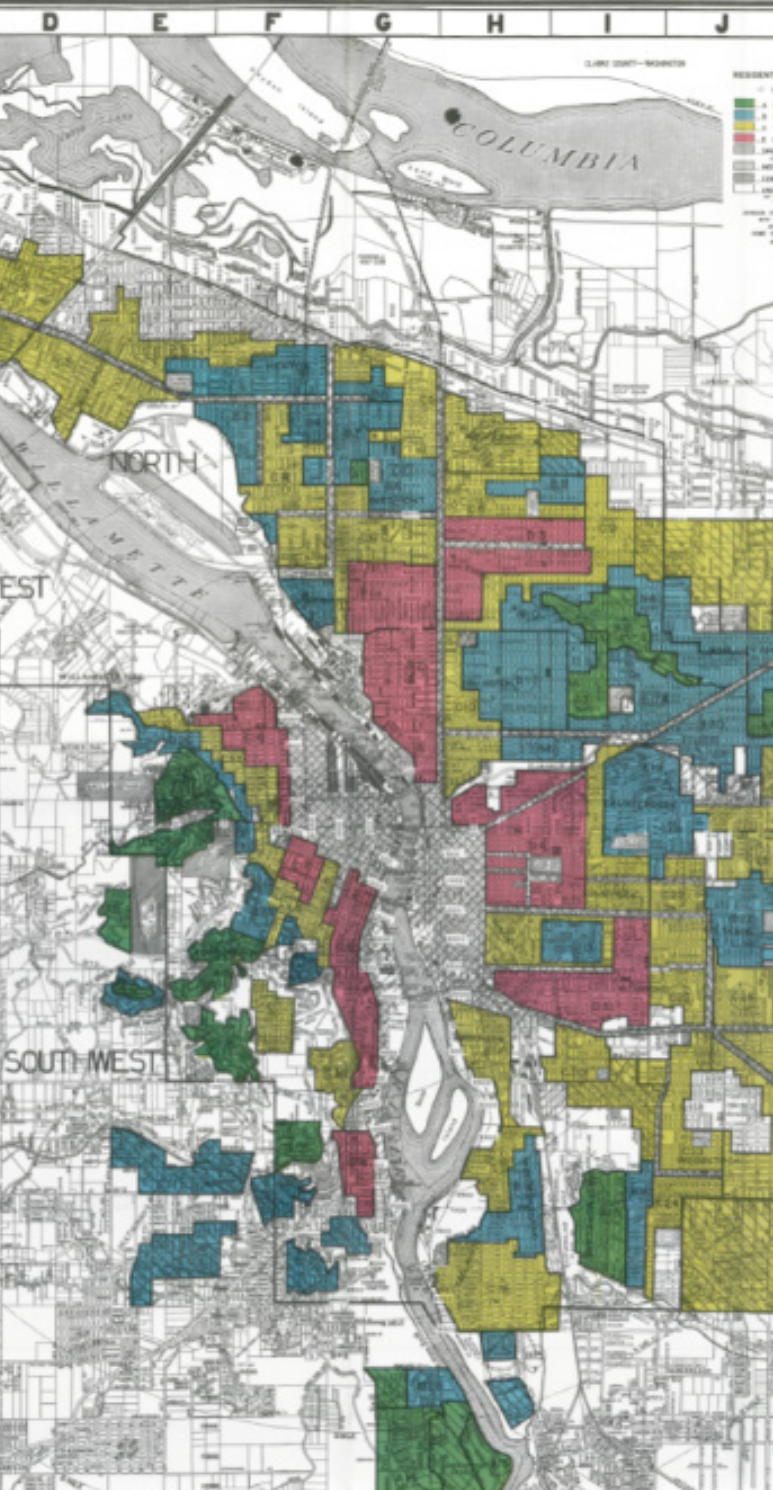
*Legacy Emmanuel Hospital (Mayor Reed)*

Figure 5. Community Amenities



**Legend**

- |                                                                                                           |                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Parks and Green Space |  Community Centers |
|  Grocery Stores        |  Public Schools    |



## 02. COMMUNITY CONTEXT

For decades, the Eliot Neighborhood was part of the heart of the Black community in Portland. But years of intentional disinvestment, urban renewal, and gentrification displaced many residents and greatly changed the neighborhood.

The N Kerby Avenue ramps are one such example. Due to redlining, the Portland Realty Board's Code of Ethics, and race-based covenants, the Lower Albina neighborhood was one of the few in Portland where Black residents could live and prosper.<sup>2</sup>



After years of intentional disinvestment, the City and the Oregon Highway Department used urban renewal and eminent domain to condemn and destroy the predominantly Black owned housing and businesses in Lower Albina to build I-5, Emanuel Hospital, the Memorial Coliseum, and the N Kerby Avenue ramps. The ramps remain a physical reminder and barrier between the Boise and Eliot neighborhoods of inner North/Northeast Portland.

The Boise/Eliot neighborhood is still an important part of the Black community in Portland, but the community profile has changed a lot over the decades due to the intentional displacement through urban renewal as well as the displacement that followed the gentrification of the neighborhood. In the 1960s and 70s, Black residents made up 60 to 80% of the neighborhood but by the year

2000, they only made up about 15% of the neighborhood. Because of this historical displacement, many Black families who owned homes and businesses in the neighborhood lost out on generational wealth that they would have otherwise grown through the increase in property values that followed the public and private investments in the community which fueled the gentrification.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, despite the demographic shifts in the neighborhood, there are many current and former residents with strong historic ties to the area who have maintained a vibrant presence in the community. However, it is traumatic for folks to return to the neighborhood, so it's important for us to look at ways in which the ramps can be removed, and have wealth generating activities, safety and a place of belonging, and hope back to the Boise/Eliot neighborhood.



## Eliot Neighborhood

1960



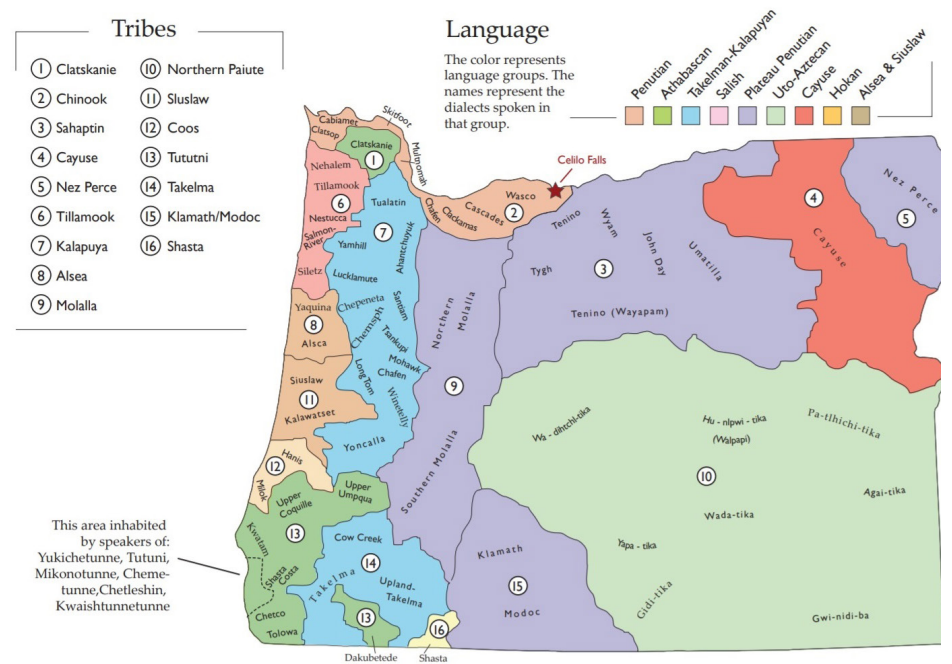
## Eliot Neighborhood

2020

# INDIGENOUS HISTORY

The Portland Metro area rests on the ancestral lands and traditional village sites of the Multnomah, Wasco, Cowlitz, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Bands of Chinook, Tualatin, Kalapuya, and Molalla, and many other tribes who established their homes along the Columbia River.<sup>4</sup> Communities thrived in their social traditions, but the arrival of colonizers at the turn of the 19th century threatened indigenous ways of life. Disease, genocide, war, and forced removal to reservations and residential schools meant that tribes suffered terrible losses – in terms of lives, but also the loss of culture, identity, and claims to land.

While much of the discussion of Albina’s history centers on the Black community, Indigenous people are an important part of Portland and the Albina neighborhood – past, present, and future. Not only was Albina originally part of the Clackamas Tribal Grounds, but the forcible removal of Indigenous people allowed for Albina to develop as it did. Tribal communities, the Urban Indigenous population, and the Native American diaspora have been present throughout the history of Albina, and their experiences in the Albina neighborhood are intertwined with those of the Black community.



Oregon Language Groups & Tribes (PSU C-GEO, Student Atlas of Oregon)

**Growth of Albina**  
early 1940's

**White Flight from Albina**  
1950's

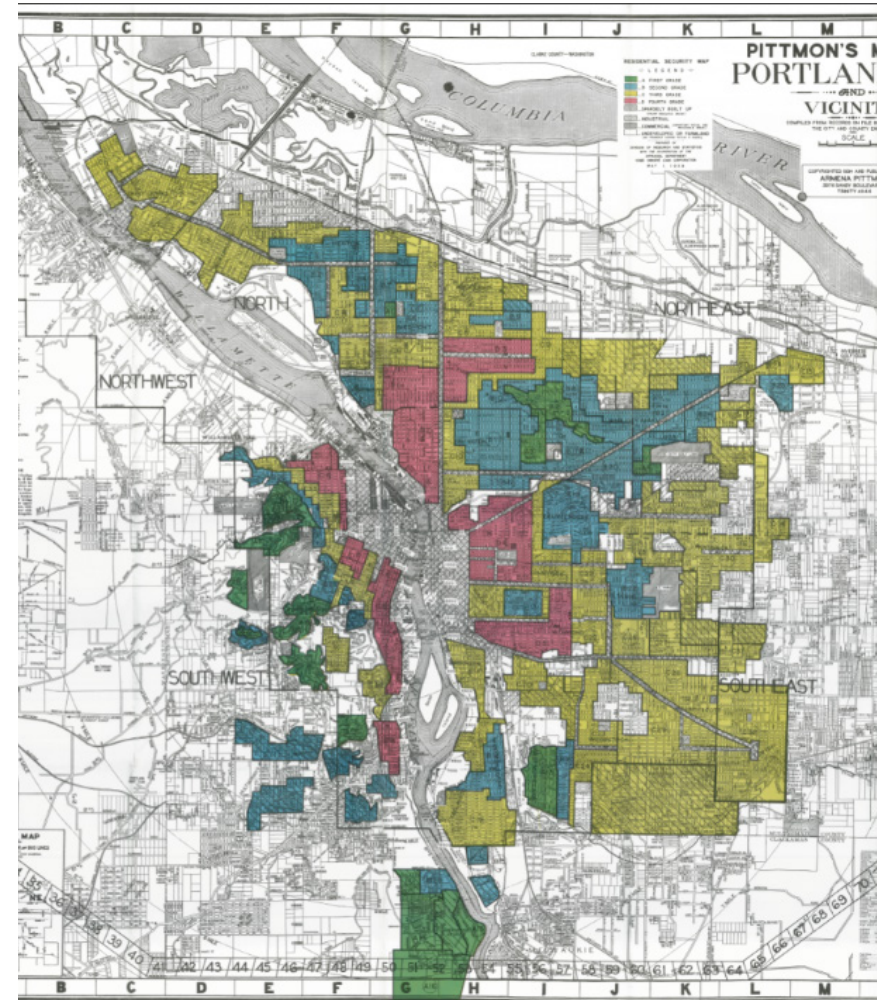
**Redlining**  
1919

**Vanport Flood**  
1948

## REDLINING & GROWTH OF ALBINA

The Portland area quickly grew into an industrial hub and became home to many different cultures. However, Portland was never a welcoming city and, in fact, actively worked towards exclusionary practices and policies against non-white residents. Beginning in 1919, Portland realtors were banned from selling properties to Black and Chinese residents.<sup>5</sup> Their housing options were restricted to the Albina neighborhood, which included the present-day Boise/Eliot neighborhood and other areas of North Portland. In the following years, more policies were put in place to restrict housing choices, including restrictive covenants, zoning, and land use.

The practice of redlining was especially impactful, where the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) categorized neighborhoods based on racial demographics, among other things. Albina was one of several neighborhoods with a "hazardous" label, indicating a "risky investment", as seen by the red denotation on the map. White households were essentially unable to receive mortgages for homes in the area. At the same time, low-income households and households of other races were forced to concentrate in the area. By 1940, a little more than half of Portland's Black community lived in the Boise/Eliot area of Albina.



*Redlining in Portland (University of Richmond)*

Emanuel Hospital Expansion  
1967

Prescott Freeway  
1973

Beginning of Urban Renewal  
1960's

Replacement Housing Agreement  
1971



*The City of Vanport: before and after the flood (Oregon Public Broadcasting)*

During World War II, there was also a high concentration of Black families living in wartime housing developments, most notably Vanport. The developments were meant to be temporary housing for workers who migrated to Portland during the war (including about 23,000 Black individuals). Many Black workers and families were restricted to Vanport and Guild's Lake and remained even after the shipyards closed in 1945. However, the city was eager to dismantle Vanport, deeming it as "blighted" due to the racial makeup and hasty housing construction, and disinvesting from improvements in the community.



*The City of Vanport: before and after the flood (Oregon Public Broadcasting)*

Three years later, in 1948, a dike on the Columbia River broke and flooded the town, killing 15 people and displacing more than 5,300 families— 1,000 of them being Black. This left thousands of residents stranded without housing, and the choice for Black families was to move into Albina or move out of Portland.<sup>6</sup>

Into the 1950s, the Eliot neighborhood experienced significant racial turnover as Black households moved into the neighborhood while white households fled to the suburbs. During this time, Black residents established a thriving community, particularly in lower Albina along Williams Avenue. Black-owned businesses, churches, and places for community gathering began to spring up—jazz clubs were a notable example.<sup>7</sup>



*North Williams and Russell Street in 1962 (Oregon Historical Society)*

The (relative) prosperity of Albina was short-lived as city planners and the Oregon Highway Department began the process of urban renewal. The desire to revitalize neighborhoods and add amenities like highways swept the nation and Black neighborhoods were often the first to fall. In Eliot, several hundred housing units were demolished to make way for the Interstate 5 and Highway 99, running north/south through Albina. Another major project was the construction of the Memorial Coliseum, which destroyed commercial establishments and over 450 homes, half of which were Black-owned or rented.<sup>8</sup>

Urban renewal projects continued into the 1960s and 70s, including the unfinished expansions of both the Legacy Emanuel Hospital and the Prescott freeway.



*Albina Residents Picketing the commission, 1973 (Oregon Historical Society)*

In 1967, Emanuel Hospital announced plans for a new medical campus in the “blighted” Albina. To make space for this, over 170 homes and businesses were cleared. The community responded with significant anger and opposition, leading Legacy to create the Replacement Housing Agreement in 1971, which promised up to 300 affordable housing units to replace those that were demolished. However, these homes were never built and the hospital expansion plan fell through, leaving dozens of Black-owned homes and businesses demolished without compensation.

The Prescott freeway was also abandoned, but not before construction had already begun; the existing work tore apart the existing street grid, and paved over homes and businesses. The expressway was shortened to connect to NE Kerby Street which opened in 1973. They now serve as the Kerby Avenue exit and on-ramps.

## GENTRIFICATION AND REINVESTMENT

After the period of urban renewal, public and private reinvestment in the neighborhood took off. Public projects included the development of the Rose Garden (now called the Moda Center) and the Portland Streetcar. Private reinvestment and real estate speculation led to gentrification and further displacement of the Black community.

The Albina District and Boise/Eliot Neighborhoods have experienced a lot of change and upheaval throughout history. The neighborhoods' development, culture, and character have been shaped by the communities that lived there and continue to exist today. Racist planning policies and urban renewal efforts greatly changed the function of the area, razing houses, disrupting street grids, and displacing thousands of residents who were an integral part of the landscape. The violent addition of the freeway and its accompanying ramps also played a major role in the changing dynamics and displacement that occurred.

Our project seeks to address these realities, centering restitution, community-led visioning and development, and justice. We hope to lay the groundwork for visible change in the neighborhood. We strive for a plan that prioritizes the current residents, displaced families, and their descendants who still have strong ties to the area.



Public Art on Williams (Oregon Live)

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Decades of demographic data further evidence the harmful history of urban planning practices and the damage inflicted on Portland's Black community. Between 1960 and the 2000s, the Black population was the majority in this area. However, there was a noticeable drop in the Black population in 2010 and again in 2020. Each drop overlapped with public and private reinvestment in the neighborhood, most notably the creation and later expansion of the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area. As the Black population dropped in 2010, the white population increased. These demographic shifts are further evidence of gentrification and displacement in the neighborhood, which was illustrated in the stories of people forced out.

The following section includes an analysis of the demographic data of the area immediately surrounding the Kerby Ave ramps. The analysis area uses two census tracts (22.03 and 34.02), which cover the majority of the Boise and Eliot neighborhoods.

### ***The Eliot Neighborhood has become less diverse.***

The number of people living in the area has grown steadily since 1990, with a big jump between 2010 and 2020. During this time, the total population grew by over 40% – a rate much higher than the city of Portland, which only grew by about 14%. However, the Black community faced continued loss over the same period, steadily falling from 49% to 31% in the project area (Figure 6). The population growth during this time only further shows the forces of gentrification and reinvestment.

That being said, in 2020, the neighborhood had a higher concentration of Black households than the Portland metro area, and overall continues to be the motivation behind returning the land to the displaced residents

As we considered what other variables and criteria should be included in our needs assessment evaluation of the space, there were other demographic characteristics that proved to be distinguishing of the neighborhood and helped guide our analysis.

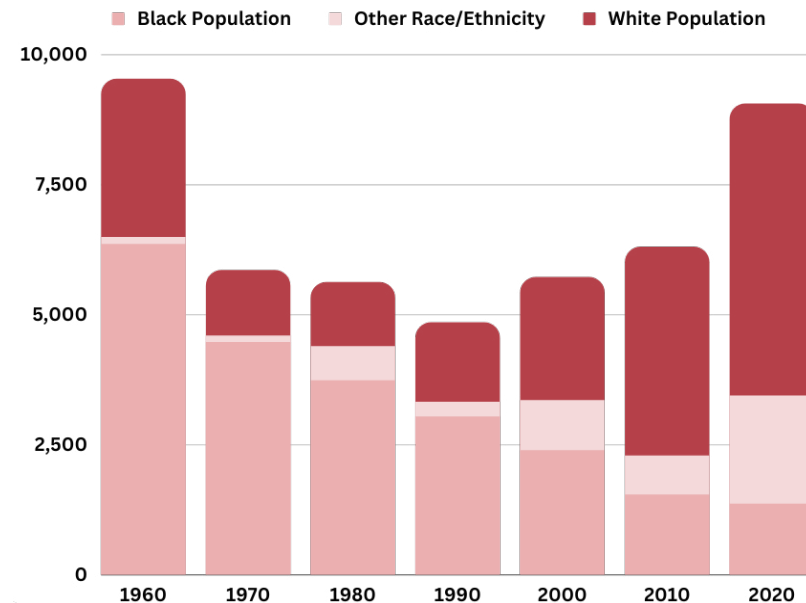


Figure 6. Decline in Black Population<sup>9</sup>

## AGE GROUPS

*The Fremont Bridgehead area has a high concentration of young adults without families.*

Compared to greater Portland, there are fewer families and fewer seniors. A large portion of the population in the project area is between the ages of 18 and 34, and the average household size is 1.9 (compared to 2.5 city-wide) (Figure 7/8). Although the implications are a little hard to parse out, further exploration and demographic modeling could help determine future housing demands for the project area. On the surface, there seems to be greater demand for smaller housing units. However, the numbers could also suggest a lack of appropriate housing for families with children. The difference in age demographics could also be related to housing affordability for different types of households, discussed in greater detail below.

	Project Site Area	Portland
Under 18 Years	11	21
18 to 34 Years	45	24
35 to 64 Years	39	41
65 and Over	5	15

Figure 7. Age by the Number<sup>10</sup>

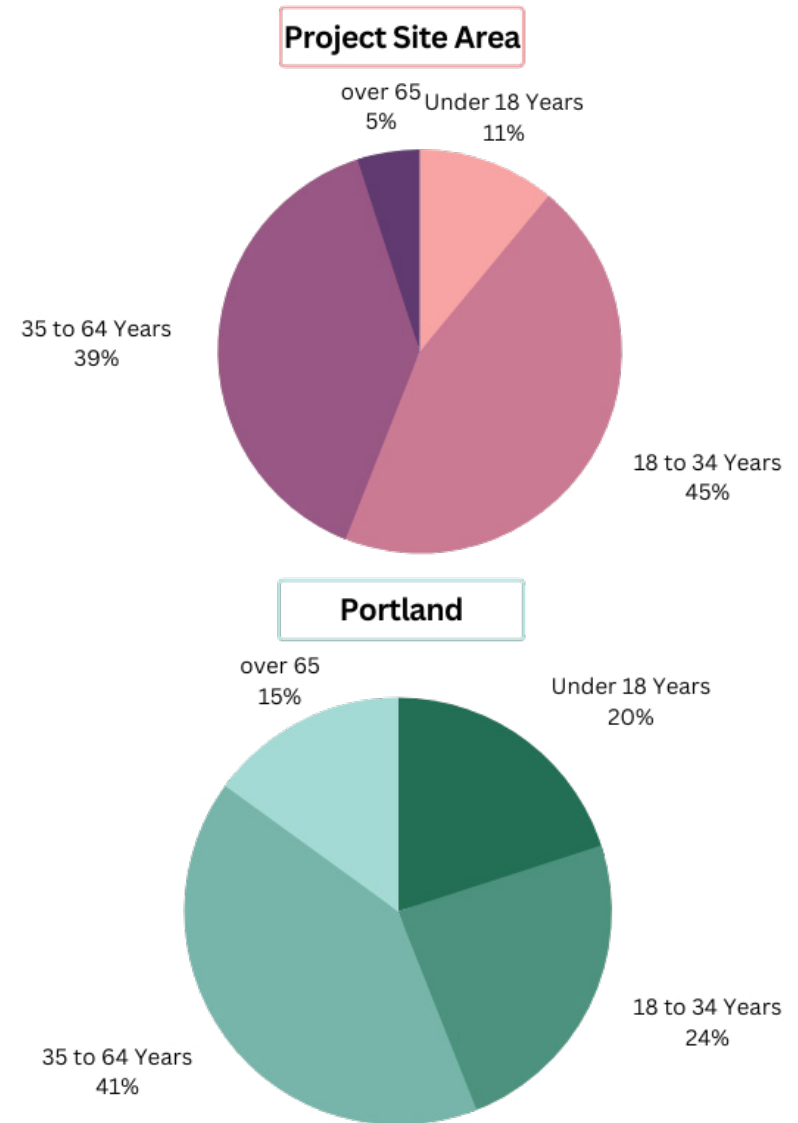


Figure 8. Age by Percentage



# INCOME AND LIMITED ENGLISH

Similar to the demographic trends in the project area, the economic conditions paint a picture of gentrification and displacement around the site. In the last decade, the neighborhood saw large shifts in median income and educational attainment. Combined with the shifts in demographics and housing trends, the difference in economic conditions illustrates changes in the neighborhood over time.

Median income has risen by over 100% since 2010, but the change in income varied across racial groups. Changes in median income were largest for Black households, for whom income more than doubled. Despite the dramatic increase, however, the median income for Black households remains the lowest of any race at \$44,742.<sup>11</sup> This is just a little over half of the median income for the area as a whole and less than half of the median income for white households (Figure 9).

Additionally, the median income for Black and Asian households in the Fremont Bridgehead area are lower than Black and Asian households in the greater Portland area. As was previously mentioned, there were hundreds of homes, and thousands of homeowners that were displaced by the urban renewal projects of the 1970’s and today. The implications of that lost generational wealth not only means that there were lost investment opportunities from home-owning early on, but now with that wealth gap, it is more difficult for people in these communities to purchase a home.

The City of Portland identifies the census tract surrounding the site area as a Limited English Proficiency tract, which means there is a concentration of households that do not speak English as their primary language.<sup>13</sup> The most common languages in the area other than English are Spanish and Arabic. Limited English Proficiency is one indicator of household vulnerability to displacement. For the project, it will also be necessary to understand the language needs of residents as deeper community engagement begins.

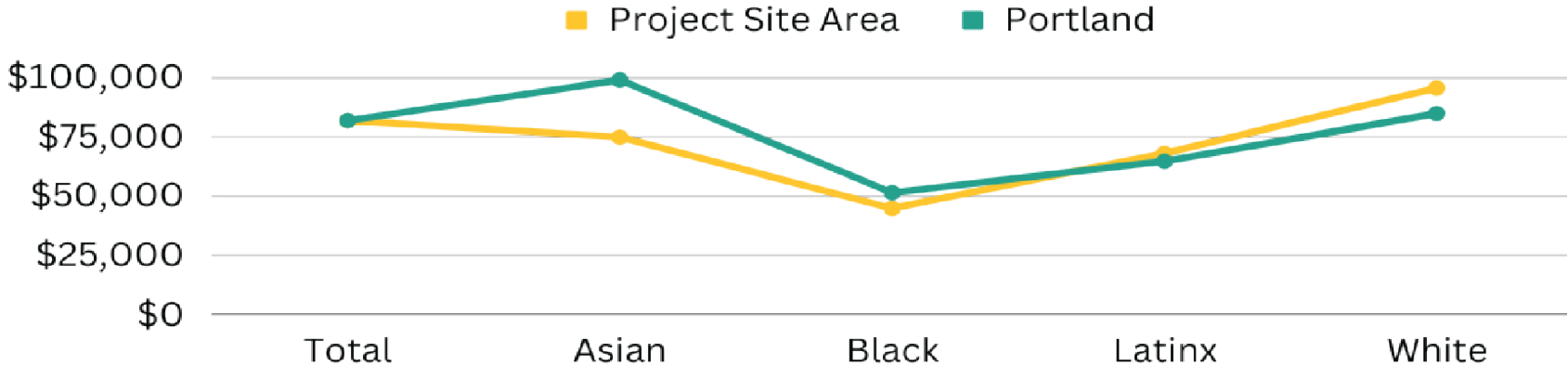


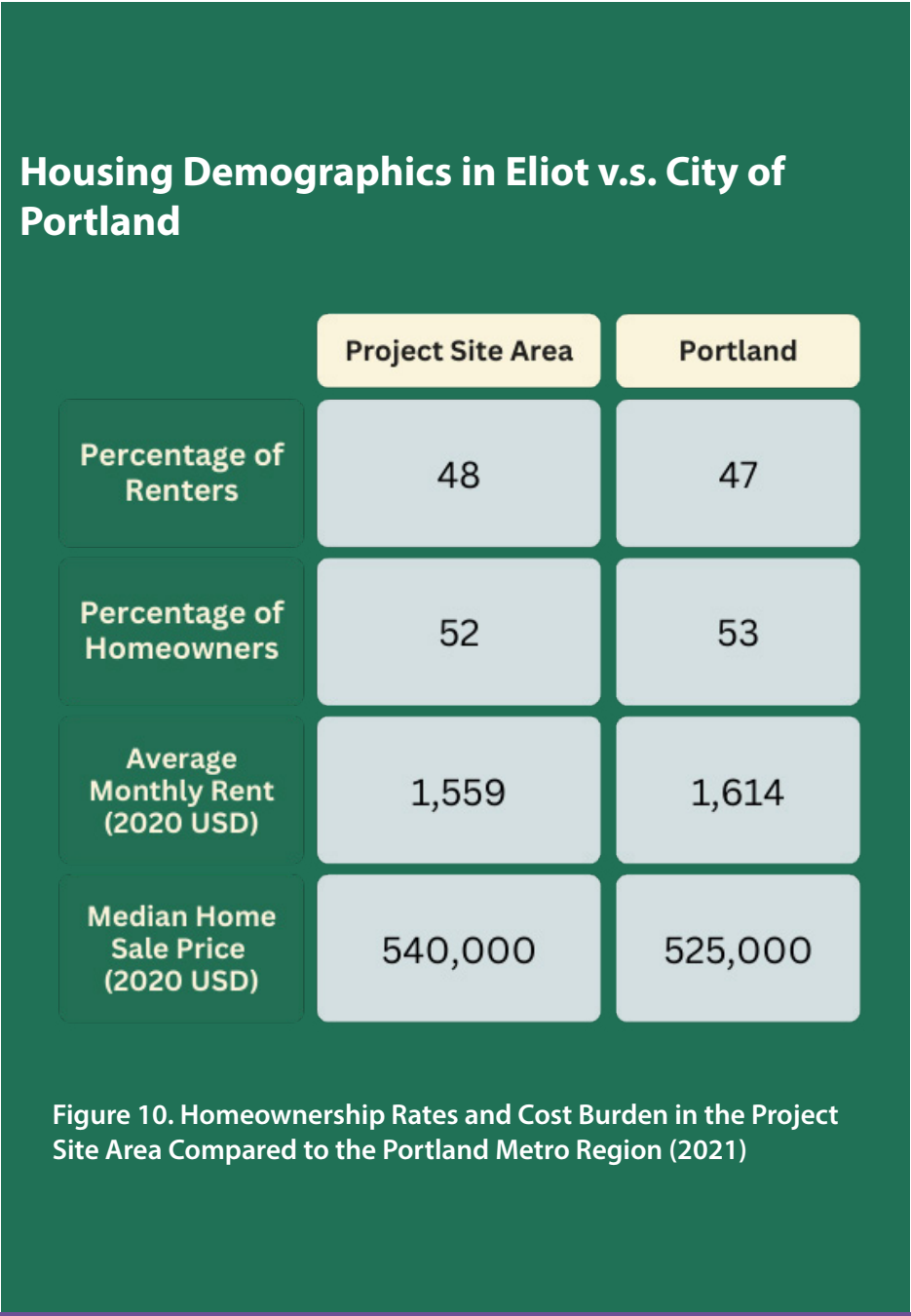
Figure 9. Median income (2021)<sup>12</sup>

# HOUSING

*In the neighborhoods surrounding the Fremont Bridgehead, the picture of housing is very similar to the greater Portland area. The cost of housing is unattainable for many – renters and homeowners alike.*

In 2020, the shares of renters and homeowners in the area were similar to the greater Portland area, though this is a recent trend. Between 2000 and 2020, the homeownership rate in the Fremont Bridgehead area fell faster than in Portland as a whole, with decreasing rates across all racial groups. Homeownership by BIPOC households has been consistently low since 2000, with the lowest rates for Black, Latinx, and Indigenous households (at 31, 33, and 42%, respectively) (Figure 10).<sup>14</sup>

In 2021, the average cost of monthly rent was \$1,559, while the median home price was \$540,000 (Figure 9/10). Based on these costs and the median income of households, owning a home was unaffordable for the average Portland household, across racial groups and including the average senior household, single mothers, and foreign-born households. Renters in the Boise/Eliot neighborhood Fremont Bridgehead area faced a similar situation. The average household of People of Color, as well as senior, single-mother, and foreign-born households could not afford the rent for any units larger than a one-bedroom. The average Black or Indigenous households could not afford to rent units of any size.





## 03. PLANNING CONTEXT

As previously mentioned, while many of the urban renewal efforts and Portland’s racist history have led to disproportionate wealth, housing, and resource impacts for communities of color, there have been some plans that have attempted to bolster the community. The Boise/ Eliot neighborhood and the greater Albina community have a long history of engaging in planning efforts that have changed the neighborhood dramatically for the sake of the “greater good.” As illustrated by the historical context, the “greater good” was often at the expense of the neighborhood and the Black community who lived and congregated here. The following are the key plans, policies, and projects that have shaped the neighborhood,

continue to influence current projects, and will ultimately have an impact on the Fremont Bridgehead Project that we are proposing recommendations and alternative actions for.

## PREVIOUS AND EXISTING PLANS (6)

### *Portland's Comprehensive Plan (1980)*

In 1980, the City Council adopted the first Comprehensive Plan to guide future development and redevelopment for the city. The plan was the result of the Oregon Legislature's Senate Bill 100, requiring comprehensive planning in Oregon in 1973. This mandate resulted in the creation of the State Land Conservation and Development Commission and directed them to adopt state-wide planning goals and guidelines, of which 19 goals were adopted, and 14 applied to the City of Portland. The Comprehensive Plan focuses on programs, major capital projects, and other funding decisions which would guide future growth and development in the city.<sup>15</sup> Citizen involvement was mandated as the 1st statewide planning goal and required the formation of a Committee for Citizen Involvement. Additionally, a "neighborhood planning kit" was provided to neighborhood associations to allow them to record localized problems and concerns which they would like to see addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. The plan was also influenced by a 1977 Population Strategy, which prioritized middle-class educated families in making policy decisions and investments to reverse the trend of "white-flight" from Portland to the suburbs.<sup>16</sup> Thus, the plan continued a trend towards prioritizing single-family housing and reduced the allowed density in many neighborhoods. While this is no longer the prominent plan governing projects in the neighborhood, the neighborhood still has a challenge with affordable housing and the zoning in the project site area still reflects that.

### *The Eliot Neighborhood Plan and the Albina Community Plan (1993)*

The Eliot Neighborhood Plan and the Albina Community Plan were developed at the same time in 1993, as extensions of the 1980 Comprehensive Plan. Their adoption as part of the Comprehensive Plan meant that the outlined goals would take a greater priority in future localized planning efforts in the city.

The Albina Community Plan identified areas for reinvestment and revitalization after decades of neglect and past urban renewal efforts had destroyed, abandoned, and isolated parts of the neighborhood. The plan prioritized revitalization of lower-density residential neighborhoods and discouraged further concentration of low-income households. It also greatly expanded opportunities for institutional development and called for a high concentration of urban renewal activity to boost business growth and development. For many of the action items, Portland Development Commission (now Prosper Portland) was identified as the implementation leader. Once adopted, the Albina Community Plan was incorporated into the city's Comprehensive Plan.<sup>17</sup> This followed decades of disinvestment which led to vacant homes and businesses and then urban renewal which displaced many of the residents and businesses from the Boise/Eliot neighborhood in particular. The Albina Community Plan laid the groundwork for the decades of investment and revitalization which subsequently led to gentrification in the neighborhoods and the continued displacement of Black residents.<sup>18</sup> This is one of the reasons why we chose to include Prosper Portland in our engagement process, as they are looking for ways to undue the harms perpetuated by the previous Development Commission.

The Eliot Plan was generally aligned with the goals of the Albina Community Plan, but outlined a more detailed and nuanced vision and objectives for the neighborhood. The Eliot Neighborhood Plan similarly called for area revitalization and higher density development along major streets (namely Williams and Vancouver, which are now considered to be “thriving commercial corridors” though have gentrified rapidly and resulted in the displacement of many residents who could no longer afford to live there or no longer felt like the neighborhood was for them). At the time, planners were very interested in rebuilding the economic base of both neighborhoods by attracting new businesses and middle-income residents. The Eliot Plan also outlined other goals, like the development of a historic design zone, the expansion of Legacy Emanuel hospital, the introduction of light rail, and the creation of pedestrian and bicycle paths.<sup>19</sup> As we look towards future engagement, it will be vital to not follow in the footsteps of previous urban renewal projects, or in future gentrifying the area as the land may be redeveloped, putting current residents at increased risk of displacement.

### ***Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area Plan (2000)***

The Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area Plan was created in 2000 and amended in 2011. Including the expansion in 2011, the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area (ICURA) is the largest urban renewal area in Portland. The plan was based in large part on the existing Albina Community Plan and shared many of the same goals centered around reinvestment and revitalization in the area. Specific plans included more mixed-use development, new job and housing opportunities, and better transportation and transit access in the area.

***These plans and investments by the city directly contributed to the dramatic demographic trends in the Boise/Eliot neighborhood from majority Black residents in the 1960s-1990s to the majority white residents of the 2010s and 2020s.***

After implementation of the plan, it became clear to the city and finally acknowledged that the benefits from the investments were not equitably spread across communities. BIPOC communities experienced restricted access to employment and wealth creation opportunities within the urban renewal area. In 2016, the city created the North/Northeast Community Development Initiative to direct the remaining funds from the urban renewal area in an attempt to correct for the unequal distribution of benefits.<sup>20</sup> Although originally set to expire in 2021, Portland City Council voted to increase the financing by \$67 million. Along with the increase, they amended the ICURA plan to allocate 70% of the funds to the Portland Housing Bureau for affordable housing development in the area. The other 30% was allocated to Prosper Portland.<sup>21</sup>

These investments have begun to make an attempt at reforming previous plans and projects that led to the current state of affairs and continued generational impacts from the unequal distribution of benefits and according to the N/NE Neighborhood Housing Strategy Oversight Committee 2022 Annual Report, between 2015 and 2022 over \$95 million was disbursed to prevent displacement through home repair grants, creating new homeowners through downpayment assistance, and creating affordable rental homes through grants with the majority of these benefits flowing towards Black residents.<sup>22</sup> The project site is not currently within the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area though the plan could potentially be amended to include the project site and increase the financing available for projects in the area.

### ***The Portland Plan (2012)***

In 2012, the City of Portland committed to the practice of “equity planning” with the adoption of the Portland Plan.<sup>23</sup> The Plan laid out a vision of a “prosperous, educated, healthy, and equitable city.” Differing from previous long-range plans, it was developed starting with a vision of the people instead of leading with infrastructure. The Portland Plan defined equity and outlined racial justice and equity-based objectives to inform the forthcoming 2035 Comprehensive Plan.<sup>24</sup> Although the Portland Plan does not specifically address the neighborhoods in the project area, the Portland Plan is used to inform all city-wide policy and funding decisions. As we will see in the engagement section, it is important for government entities to practice these commitments to equity, accountability, and look towards restorative projects for the future.

### ***2035 Comprehensive Plan (2016)***

The most recent comprehensive plan for the City of Portland was adopted in 2016, with the last amendment to the plan adopted in March 2023. As with the 1980 Plan, the City of Portland was required by the state to create a long-range land-use plan, which would guide development in the city for a twenty-five year period.

The 2035 Comprehensive Plan outlined the city’s commitment to improving transportation (walkable and bikeable neighborhoods, better transit access, and active main streets) as well as active job centers and more access to parks and open spaces. After significant community organizing efforts, the 2035 Plan also included plans for housing with a focus on anti-displacement policies. As with the Portland Plan, the Comprehensive Plan outlined goals and policy objectives for the entire city, which are used to make decisions at the neighborhood level.<sup>25</sup>

### ***The People’s Plan (2017)***

In 2017, the Portland African American Leadership Forum prepared the People’s Plan with the goal of empowering the voices of leaders in the Black community. The plan is intended to contextualize demographic data with community-defined visions and objectives for the future of Portland’s Black population. The Plan covers eight topic areas – community, health, housing, economic development, environmental justice, youth & education, arts & culture, and restorative justice. For each topic area, the People’s Plan provides a vision for a thriving Black community in Portland and the collective actions that are needed to get there.<sup>26</sup> Goals from this plan, in particular, helped to guide alternatives and recommendations in this current plan, as community-led visioning exercises were included in the process.

## **EXISTING PLANS (3)**

### ***North / Northeast Community Development Initiative***

Prosper Portland launched the North / Northeast Community Development Initiative and prepared the accompanying Action Plan in 2017 with the goal of fostering economic prosperity among African Americans and People of Color in the North / Northeast neighborhoods. The initiative was a response to the evidence that the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area benefits had not been equitably distributed and instead had caused harm to the Black community.<sup>27</sup>

### ***North / Northeast Neighborhood Housing Strategy***

The Portland Housing Bureau developed the North / Northeast Neighborhood Housing Strategy to address the legacy of displacement in North and Northeast Portland neighborhoods through investments in new affordable rental housing, opportunities for first-time homebuyers, and home retention programs for longtime residents. This includes the Preference Policy which gives preference to residents who were harmed by Portland city actions, specifically urban renewal efforts within the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area which includes the Boise-Eliot neighborhood.<sup>28</sup> The strategy has primarily been funded by the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal Area financing initially with \$20 million in 2014 and is up to approximately \$70 million through 2022. The Housing Bureau continues to support new affordable homeownership and rental housing in the area and is a key partner in support of affordable housing on the project site.

### ***Anti-Displacement Action Plan***

The Portland Bureau of Planning & Sustainability prepared the Anti-Displacement Action Plan in acknowledgement of the history of separation, exclusion, displacement, and vast racial disparities reflected in housing, employment, safety, and health outcomes in Portland caused by the combination of urban renewal, redevelopment, and transportation projects in neighborhoods. The plan seeks to provide a path forward towards realizing the goal of more equitable outcomes for all, by targeting solutions towards historically underserved and marginalized communities of color, particularly the Black and Indigenous communities in Portland who have been impacted the most by the gentrification caused by revitalization.<sup>29</sup>

## RECENT PROJECTS

### *North Williams Safety Project*

The North Williams Safety Project (2014) was a \$1.5 million PBOT project, that included the creation of a bicycle greenway and pedestrian safety improvements. This project, while designed to benefit all travelers, brought up deep community concerns particularly from the historic Black community. Members of the community feared that the project would mostly benefit newer, white residents in the neighborhood. In response to the community's concern the community engagement process for the project was extended with additional community meetings and an expanded stakeholder advisory committee to include broader representation.<sup>30</sup> The greenway was eventually developed, but the process led to a new level of distrust between members of the community and City agencies. Projects like these have led to continued consideration for how to approach efforts with the Fremont Bridgehead Project.



*Community for North Williams Ave Plan (Oregon Live)*

### *Williams & Russell Project*

In 2017, the city, Prosper Portland (formerly the Portland Development Commission), and Legacy Health announced the Williams & Russell Project as a collaborative project to develop a parcel owned by the hospital, which has been vacant since the 1970s. The project is focused on honoring Portland's African-American community and supporting the community's housing and economic needs.<sup>31</sup> In 2021, a Black-led development team was selected by the Project Working Group to advance the community vision for the Williams & Russell project. The property will be granted to a new nonprofit, the Williams and Russell Community Development Corporation, which will negotiate with the development team moving forward.<sup>32</sup> While this project is still in the planning stage, it is an example for how ENA could work with Prosper Portland, and the property owners in the project area to redevelop the parcels.



*William & Russell Project (Prosper Portland)*



# PROJECTS CURRENTLY IN PROGRESS

## Albina Vision Trust

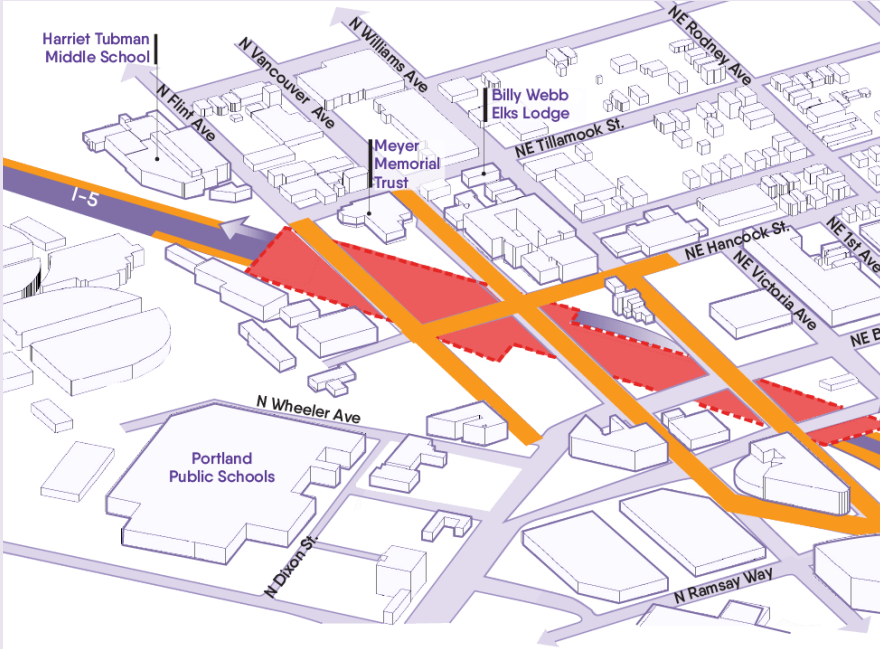
The Albina Vision Trust (AVT) was created as a non-profit in 2017 to steward the vision for the future of lower Albina. The Albina Vision Trust is focused on honoring the neighborhood’s past by transforming what exists today into a socially and economically inclusive community. The work includes an affordable housing property in the Boise-Eliot Neighborhood; a Community Investment Plan; a youth centered community; and engagement with the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project.<sup>33</sup> In February 2023, Albina Vision Trust was awarded a Reconnecting Communities planning grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation in the amount of \$800,000. The funds are currently associated with planning for the development of the I-5 highway caps.<sup>34</sup> Additionally, the Albina Vision Trust serves as a key model for how to conduct extensive and community-led visioning and engagement so that the values are honored throughout the development process.



Community rendering (Henneberry Eddy Architects, Inc.)

## Rose Quarter Improvement Project

In 2017, Oregon Legislators passed House Bill 2017 “Keep Oregon Moving,” which partially funded the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project.<sup>35</sup> The project intends to improve safety and congestion along the I-5 corridor by expanding the highway. In response to significant community opposition, the project was later scaled up to include large highway caps to allow for development atop a portion of the highway. Albina Vision Trust is leading the development of the caps. Though this does not directly impact the N Kerby Avenue ramps, it will more than likely change how the I-5 Rose Quarter is utilized and will have traffic implications.



Project map with improvements (ODOT)



# 04. PROJECT SITE ANALYSIS

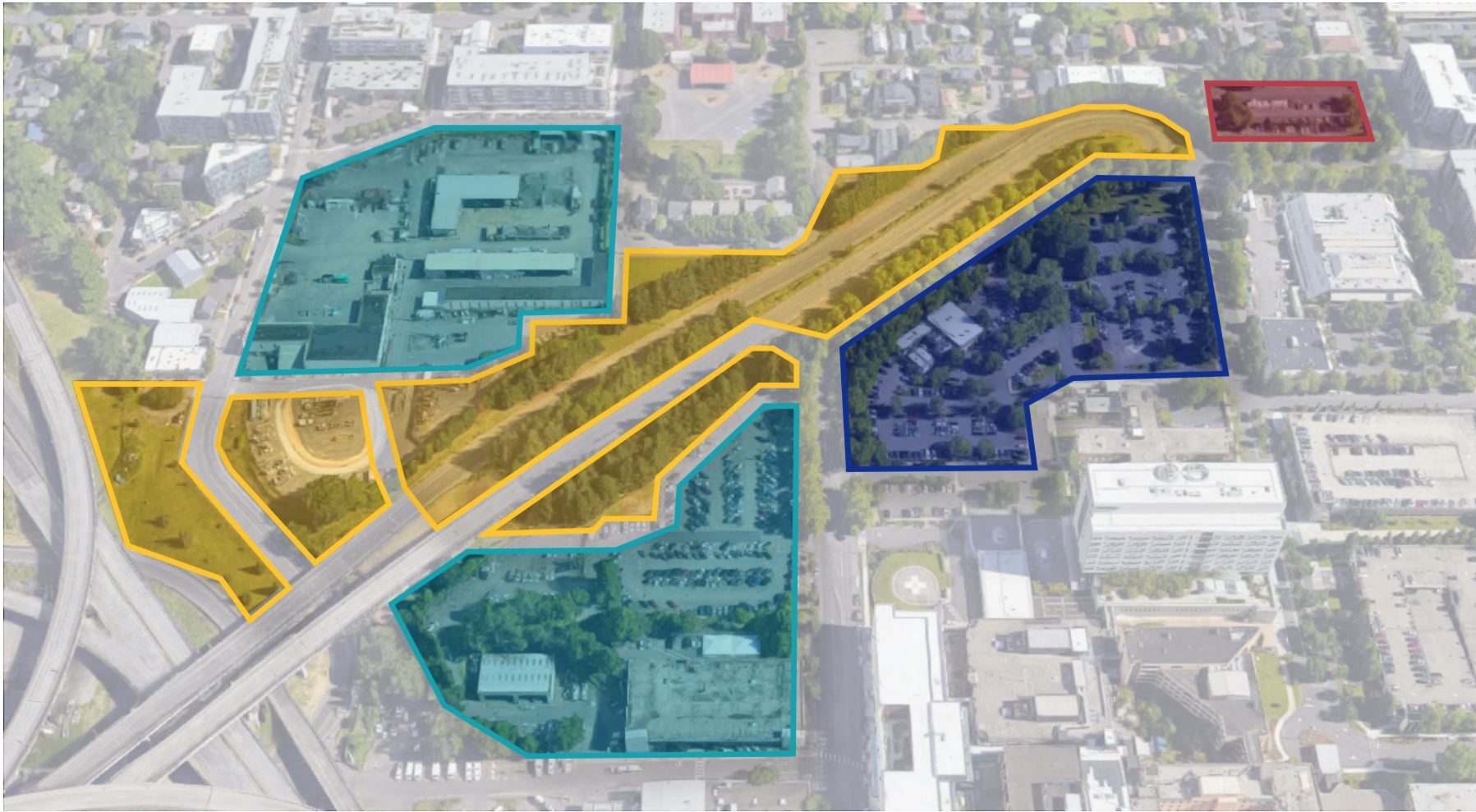
In order to understand the technical and physical aspects of the site area, we completed an analysis looking at the land uses and zoning, transportation systems, opportunities & constraints for future development or redesign, and the existing community assets.

This analysis was used in combination with relevant neighborhood plans, policies, and projects, as well as the current demographics of the area. With this, previously identified community goals were used to develop the framework for evaluating the recommendations for the project.

There are 8 potential sites currently owned by the City of Portland/Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), Oregon Department of Transportation

(ODOT), Legacy Emanuel Hospital, and the American Red Cross which provide the opportunity for redevelopment of about 25 acres of land in the heart of Northeast Portland and the edge of the Central City (Figure 11). Legacy Emanuel Hospital and the American Red Cross have been unresponsive to our requests. Our portion of the project narrows in on the land currently occupied and owned by ODOT and PBOT, which tallies to about 25.3 acres. The City of Portland/PBOT land totals 15 acres and is currently used for the Stanton Yard and Fleet Services including employee parking, maintenance facilities, and storage. The ODOT land totals 10.3 acres and is currently vacant, leased to the City of Portland/PBOT, or occupied by the ramps.


Figure 11. Site Owners Map



**Legend**

 Owned by City of Portland

 Owned by Oregon Department of Transportation

 Owned by Legacy Emmanuel Hospital

 Owned by Oregon American Red Cross

## LAND USE & ZONING

The acreage that holds the ramps is zoned as Residential Multi-Dwelling 2 (RM2). The RM2 zone designation is defined as:

*A medium-scale multi-dwelling zone that is generally applied in and around a variety of centers and corridors that are well-served by transit. Allowed housing is characterized by buildings of up to three or four stories with a higher percentage of building coverage than in the RM1 zone, while still providing opportunities for landscaping and outdoor spaces that integrate with residential neighborhood characteristics. The major types of new housing development will be a diverse range of multi-dwelling structures and other compact housing that contribute to the intended urban scale of centers and corridors, while providing transitions in scale and characteristics to lower-scale residential neighborhoods.*

This area would provide a good opportunity to provide additional housing in the neighborhood and a reconnected grid network. The other property that would be most easily redeveloped is the American Red Cross owned property zoned Commercial Mixed Use 2 (CM2). The CM2 zone is defined as:

*A medium-scale zone intended for sites in a variety of centers, along corridors, and in other mixed use areas that have frequent transit service. The zone allows a wide range and mix of commercial and residential uses, as well as employment uses that have limited off-site impacts. Buildings in this zone will generally be up to four stories tall unless height and floor area bonuses are used, or plan district provisions specify other height limits. Development is intended to be pedestrian-oriented, provide a strong relationship between buildings and sidewalks, and complement the scale of surrounding residentially zoned areas.*

This site would be ideal for a mixed use development with ground floor commercial/retail with residential above similar to existing buildings along N Vancouver and N Williams Aves.

The majority of the remaining sites owned by the City of Portland/Portland Bureau of Transportation and Oregon Department of Transportation are zoned General Industrial 1 (IG1). The IG2 zone is defined as:

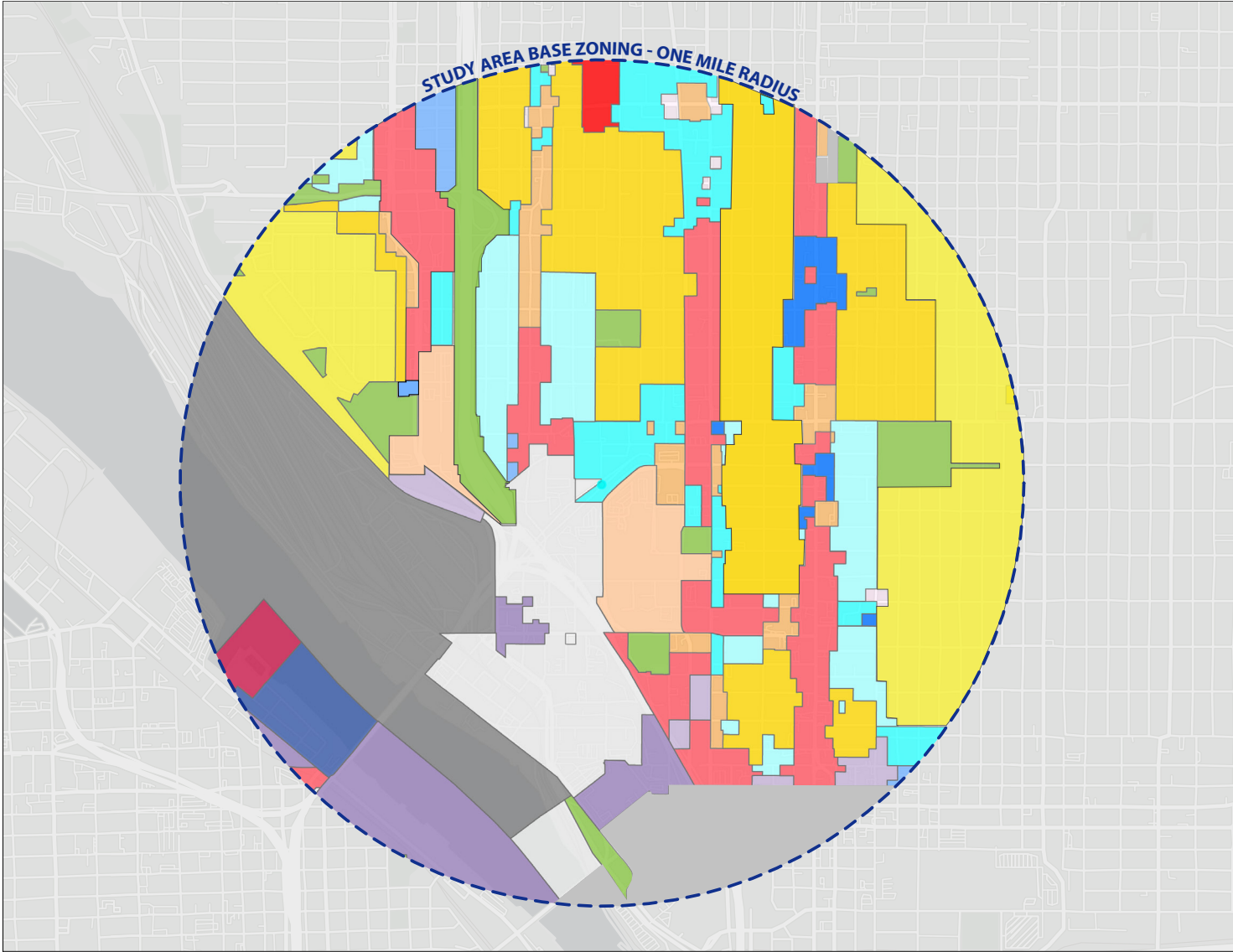
*Generally have larger lots and an irregular or large block pattern. The area is less developed, with sites having medium and low building coverages and buildings which are usually set back from the street.*

There is also one small site owned by the Oregon Department of Transportation which is zoned General Employment 1 (EG1) which is defined as:

*Generally have smaller lots and a grid block pattern. The area is mostly developed, with sites having high building coverages and buildings which are usually close to the street. EG1 zoned lands will tend to be on strips or small areas.<sup>36</sup>*

These sites could be rezoned though due to the importance of industrially zoned land in the city and potential for contamination due to past uses, the best use for these sites would likely be innovative industrial and new technology spaces which could provide employment and wealth generation opportunities in the neighborhood (Figure 12)

Figure 12. Site Area Zoning



**Legend**

- |                        |                        |                           |                              |                              |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Campus Institutional 2 | Commercial Mixed Use 2 | Heavy Industrial          | Residential 2,500            | Residential Multi-Dwelling 3 |
| Central Commercial     | Commercial Mixed Use 3 | General Employment 1      | Residential 5,000            | Residential Multi-Dwelling 4 |
| Central Residential    | General Industrial 1   | Institutional Residential | Residential Multi-Dwelling 1 |                              |
| Central Employment     | General Industrial 2   | Open Space                | Residential Multi-Dwelling 2 |                              |

## TRANSPORTATION

The Boise and Eliot neighborhood were historically connected in a grid structure similar to the rest of the city. This lent itself to an ease of getting around the neighborhood, an increased level of connectivity, and a lower speed and higher levels of traffic safety. It also contributed to less environmental impacts from the diesel emissions and noise pollution introduced to the area. The previous grid network can be seen in the aerial images from 1960 versus 2020. These areas are now disconnected from each other with limited access for people walking or rolling between the neighborhoods. The grid structure in the Boise/Eliot Neighborhood (1960 versus 2020).



*Previous grid network, 1960*

This disconnected transportation system can be seen not only in the land use, but in the infrastructure supporting the ramps. Most of the surrounding streets in the area have full sidewalk connectivity on both sides except for a few gaps with either partial or missing sidewalks. However, there is a significant gap that lies along the freeway ramps where there is no safe or convenient path to cross between these parts of the Boise and Eliot neighborhoods, leaving a disjointed, disconnected, and dangerous space.



*Current grid and disconnection, today*

While transit access is seen as a community asset, especially as the N Vancouver Ave and N Williams Ave corridor is served by frequent bus service along the eastern edge of the site area, there is only non-frequent bus service that uses the current freeway ramps to provide service between Boise/Eliot and Northwest Portland. Therefore, removing the ramps would potentially impact access to Northwest Portland from the neighborhood, but the frequent bus service around the neighborhood would not be impacted.

The N Vancouver Ave and N Williams Ave commercial corridor is also served by an established bikeway along the eastern edge of the site area. North Mississippi Avenue is served by a dedicated bike lane on the western edge of the site area. This means the project area is in close proximity to established bike and bus networks though there are currently no safe or convenient connections between the two corridors and across the project area. There could also be the opportunity to expand the Portland Green Loop to streets further north than its current northern limits of NE Clackamas Street, and increasing connectivity and opportunity to the rest of the city.

## **TRAFFIC INCREASES**

The most recent traffic counts on the I-405 off-ramp conducted in 2011 show average daily traffic volume of just under 10,000 during a normal weekday with more than two thirds of traffic in the afternoon and the afternoon peak hour consisting of just over 1,000 vehicles. About 60% of the traffic from off-ramp travels east on N Kerby Ave with the other 40% traveling west.<sup>37</sup> Reconfiguring or removing the ramps would impact the traffic patterns in this and surrounding areas as travel patterns change. Therefore, a more in depth traffic analysis based on the potential reconfiguration of the

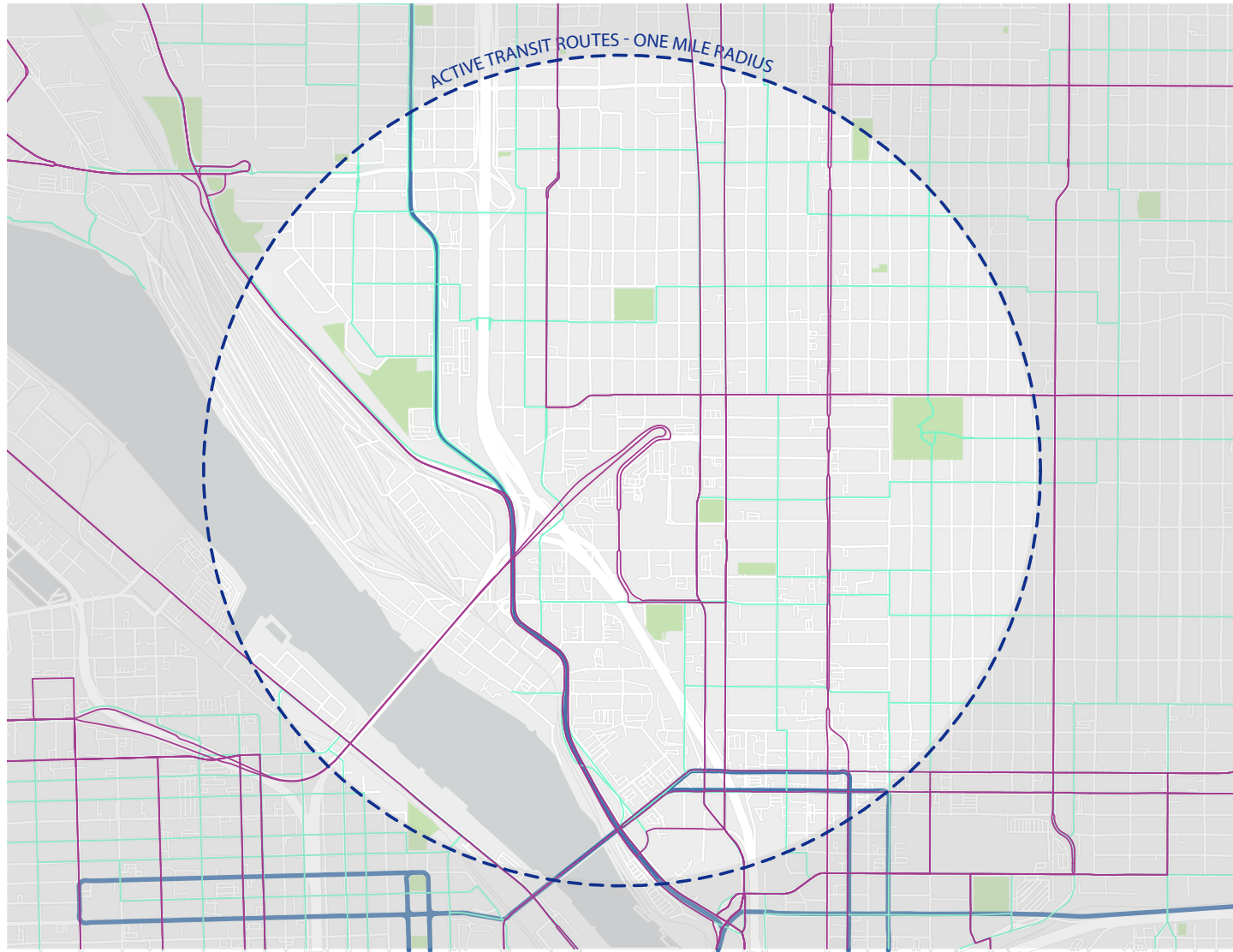
ramps would need to be completed to evaluate the alternatives. This was discussed more in Round 2 Engagement Interviews, and is included as a portion of Next Steps.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

A vital component to our technical site analysis was the environment and health indicators of those living near the ramps. A higher percentage of People of Color live in the tracts located closest to the ramps, and those same tracts have the highest exposure of NO<sub>2</sub> compared to the tracts surrounding it. The community is also impacted by smog and pollution from freight and passenger vehicles including particulate matter (PM-2.5). The presence of the I-405 Kerby Ave ramps diverts the flow of traffic through the neighborhood, which increases vehicle emissions from exhaust as well as tire and brake wear, which leads to increased PM-2.5 emissions.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and their advisory board studied toxic air pollutants in the Portland area and identified five emission categories for further investigation: residential wood burning, cars and trucks, heavy-duty diesel vehicles, diesel construction equipment and industrial metals facilities since these were the major sources of toxic air pollutants in the Portland area.<sup>38</sup> Because of the industrial land uses along the riverfront, there are additional sources of emissions within the neighborhood. Furthermore, the land adjacent to the ramps used as maintenance yards by ODOT and PBOT could have environmental contamination which would need to be cleaned up before residential or commercial uses could be considered.

Figure 13. Active Transit Map

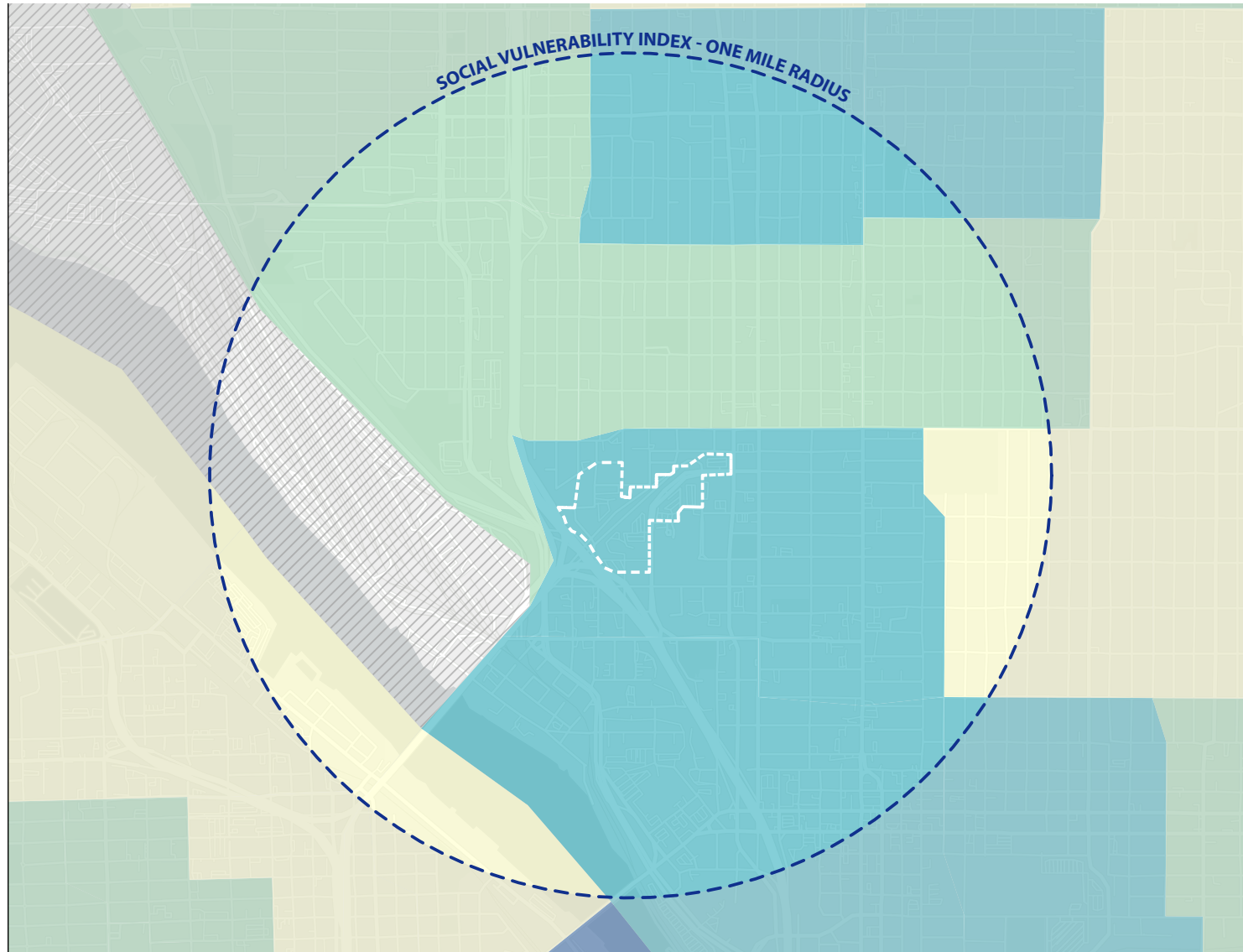


Legend

- TriMet MAX Routes
- TriMet Bus Routes
- Bicycle Routes

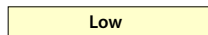


Figure 14. Social Vulnerability Index

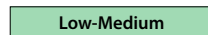


**Legend**

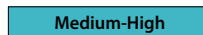
Level of Vulnerability



Low



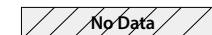
Low-Medium



Medium-High



High



No Data

# OPPORTUNITIES, ASSETS, & CONSTRAINTS

After the existing site conditions were identified, the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) for the neighborhood and project were distinguished. This SWOT analysis helped to inform the questions we asked throughout the stakeholder engagement process and added ideas to our future project recommendations (Figure 15).

The strengths include the pre-existing sewer mains from the historic homes and businesses that used to occupy this land before urban renewal projects demolished them via eminent domain. This existing infrastructure could reduce redevelopment costs. Additionally, the surrounding land uses including existing community assets and prime market conditions make this land highly desirable for redevelopment. Some of the weaknesses include the topography with some areas exceeding 25% slope which can increase the cost of development and landslide risks, the existing ownership and use of the land, as well as the compact nature and shape of the sites which adds potential complexity to the development. The project site area has the opportunity to bring back cultural and community vibrancy, create economic opportunities for those who were impacted by the ramp construction, and focus on environmental justice. Finally, some of the threats include identifying financing, local competition for funding and attention, a potentially long timeline, and losing the local voice and vision.

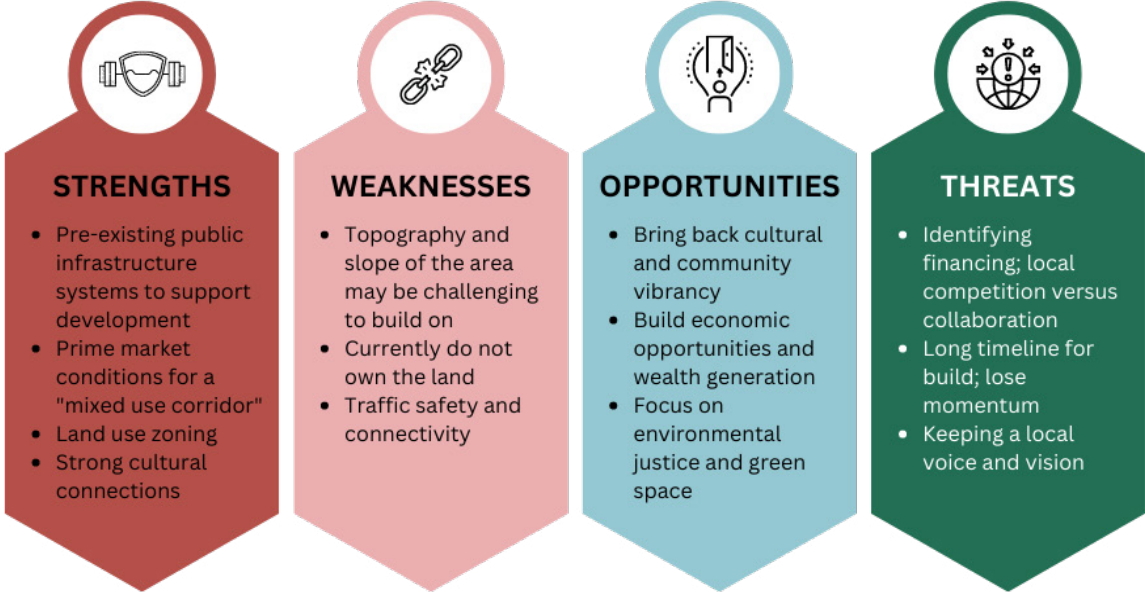


Figure 15. SWOT Analysis

**WHAT WOULD YOUR  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
BE LIKE IF YOU  
FELT THAT YOUR  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
AS A SPACE,  
AS A  
COMMUNITY,  
LOVED BLACK  
PEOPLE**



## 05. ENGAGEMENT

In determining how best to conduct engagement in the community, our team was faced with several realities that largely shaped our engagement strategy. Engagement fatigue, especially amongst Black community members, was expressed to us at our very first ENA Board Meeting. Folks felt that institutions have recently been trying to engage the Black community but those engagements have not led to tangible progress.

Additionally, our team is composed of 5 white folks that are not from the Boise/Eliot community. As outsiders, our condensed project timeline did not provide the space necessary to build trust with the community. Considering these sentiments in addition to our positionalities and short project timeline, we decided early on in our process not to focus on resident engagement. We believe that members of the Fremont Bridgehead

Reclamation team in the coming months and years will better be able to conduct resident engagement that is predicated on trust. Instead, our team chose to focus on stakeholder engagement that would strategically connect ENA with potential partners and agencies that can provide advice regarding technical considerations.

Stakeholder engagement was carried out in two rounds between March and June 2023. For each round, relationship-building and information-gathering were the main goals. The first round focused on government agencies and the Eliot Neighborhood Association (ENA) Board. The second round of engagement opened the conversation to community-based organizations (CBOs) to understand their perspective on neighborhood problems and opportunities. It also gathered government agencies for a small focus group to discuss feasibility.

## GOALS

The following objectives guided both rounds of engagement:

1. *Identify possible project partners.*
2. *Develop relationships with key stakeholders from government agencies and community-based organizations.*
3. *Determine the institutional support and community buy-in.*
4. *Explore feasibility and timelines for changes to the Kerby Avenue ramps and redevelopment of the area.*
5. *Understand strengths and challenges in the neighborhood and identify community goals and priorities.*



*Left and Above: The People's Plan (Portland African American Leaders Forum PAALF, 2017)*

Figure 16. Engagement Round 1

<b>Government Agencies</b>	
Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)	Prosper Portland
Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT)	Portland Public Schools
Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS)	Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)
Metro Regional Government	Tribal Relations Committee at City of Portland
<b>Community-Based Organizations</b>	
Emanuel Displaced Persons Association (EDPA2)	Community-based Social Justice Organization
Albina Vision Trust	Community Advocacy Organization
North by Northeast	Community Health Center
Sunrise Movement PDX	Environmental Advocacy Organization
Freeway Fighters	National Advocacy Organization
Colloqate	Design Justice Planning Firm
Portland Harbor Community Coalition	Environmental Advocacy Coalition
We All Rise	Economic Development Firm
Proud Ground	Community Land Trust
Reconnect South Park	Neighborhood Advocacy Group

# ROUND 1

## CORE THEMES

**Community control is paramount.** An authentic vision starts within the community. For a project centered around restitution, the interests of displaced residents are key. This project can also serve the community through capacity building, but will require attention to representation, the balance of power, and control over decision making.

**Build power by extending the network.** This is an advocacy project. The project origins start in the community, so power and capacity are limited. Create a support network to push the project forward. Find champions in community organizations, government agencies, and elected positions who will advocate for the project.

**This is a generational project.** Due to the long timeline for ramp removal, use a phased approach to keep project momentum. Identify small victories and break into discrete projects that could be used for funding. Ongoing community engagement will be essential for this project. However, the team heard from many different people that the Eliot community has been overwhelmed with engagement requests in recent years, leading to “engagement fatigue.” Many people noted that the true source of fatigue is the community’s participation without seeing their suggestions realized. With this in mind, the team decided to turn to key stakeholders and outline recommendations for future engagement.

*“You can’t jump forward to a development decision if you’re not together as a group to understand the distinction between history and memory. The committee has to decide where to go based on where they’ve been”*

*“The community needs to define the benefits, but often the planners present what projects are going to*

## SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

### Community Benefits Agreement

This tool can be used to establish terms between communities and developers, where developers often agree to make concessions or public investments that benefit the community. In Portland, CBA's have often required that developers commit to using MWESB contractors, architects, and consultants for their development projects in a given area.

### Community Land Trusts

This tool promotes community ownership of land and homebuying opportunities for lower-income folks. It is heralded for "recycling" initial subsidy dollars and creating permanently affordable housing units.

### Affordable Housing

This desire stems from high housing costs in the Boise/Eliot neighborhood and displacement at the hands of gentrification. There are multiple tools to achieve this desire.

### Homeownership Opportunities

Affordable homeownership opportunities are of particular interest. Homeownership is traditionally Americans' largest investment and primary driver of familial wealth.

### Avenues for Generational Wealth Building

There is a desire for community members, especially Black community members, to benefit financially from redevelopment that occurs in their neighborhood. There are multiple tools that can be considered to achieve this desire.

Figure 17. Engagement Round 1

Description of Engagement
<p><b>Stakeholder Interviews</b></p> <p>1-hour interviews with representatives of five government agencies and two teams of comparable projects</p> <p>Advance relationships with key stakeholders and (re)introduce agencies to the project Explore technical and political feasibility of ramp alterations and redevelopment of surrounding sites</p>
<p><b>Eliot Neighborhood Association Meetings</b></p> <p>Attended five monthly neighborhood association board meetings</p> <p>Gain insight into neighborhood happenings/challenges Engage with community members who serve on ENA board or attend meetings Provide project updates and gather feedback on project deliverables</p>

# ROUND 2

## CORE THEMES

**One of the largest hurdles of the project is a profound lack of trust in institutions.** While local agencies and institutions are sometimes useful and often unavoidable project partners, their historical roles in the neighborhood likely create a barrier for community involvement and support for any project. The role of specific agencies and institutions in the project will require careful consideration.

**Make connections to existing projects or identified issues.** The area is close to a number of active projects, from institutions and other community organizations. Identify the areas of overlap to build support and combine resources. Use the network to better understand assets and gaps within the community.

**Political, institutional, and organizational values are potentially aligned with restorative justice projects.** While we reached out to community-based organizations that we knew were committed to restorative justice, we were surprised by the support from state and local agencies and their claimed interest in restorative justice. The agency representatives we engaged expressed a continued commitment to reversing past harms. That being said, their capacity and decision-making capability is limited. Identifying potential partners that can continuously commit to restorative justice while advancing the project can be influential in fostering community excitement around the project. For a project centered around restitution, the interests of displaced residents are key. This project can also serve the community through capacity building, but will require attention to representation, the balance of power, and control over decision making.

*“Empower folks who have been disproportionately harmed in the past – treat them as local experts and compensate them as such if possible”*

*“[I have a] problem with a lot of the work being done in this area as “poverty planning”. A lot of these projects have only offered people affordable housing with below market rent though do not allow for displaced residents who could afford market based rent...Don’t just focus on the top and the bottom of the income brackets though also the middle- income folks.”*



## SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

### Community Investment Trust

A model pioneered by MercyCorps in East Portland, a CIT is a tool for community wealth building via small-dollar recurring investments. Using real estate as the investment vehicle, community members have the opportunity to realize financial gains from annual dividends and long-term property appreciation of a local property. Additional benefits of this tool include financial/investment education for community investors.

### Climate Resilience Hub

Climate resilience hubs facilitate emergency communication and services, aid in resource distribution, provide backup energy and food resources, and can serve as a shelter during and after emergencies, like wildfires, extreme weather events, and earthquakes. Outside of emergency times, they can be utilized to support day-to-day programming and act as centers of care, teaching and empowering residents beyond disaster preparedness.

### Mixed-income Housing

Multifamily, rental housing that provides a mixture of market rate homes and homes available to those making below the Area Median Income.

### Black History Museum or Cultural Center

A space dedicated to the history of Black Portlanders that can also host culturally specific programming.

Figure 18. Engagement Round 2

Description of Engagement
<p><b>CBO Interviews</b></p> <p>Half-hour interviews with nine community-based organizations</p>
<p>Introduce organizations to FBH project and learn about their work in the neighborhood Identify potential partners/allies for future of project Understand community needs as identified by neighborhood organizations</p>
<p><b>Stakeholder Workshop</b></p> <p>In-person workshop with six representatives from various government agencies</p>
<p>Further engage with stakeholders and facilitate a conversation between organizations Continue to explore technical feasibility of ramp alterations, including financing and political challenges Provide additional context and project updates to agencies</p>

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

**Extensive participation and community-led processes are critical.** Authentic engagement takes time – a lot of work is required to build relationships and gain trust. Quality in engagement is as important as quantity. Community involvement is an unending process and communication matters. Grassroots organizing and coalition building are essential to ensure the project addresses the true needs and goals of a community.

### **Develop a strong community vision to guide the project.**

At this stage, there are many possibilities for the direction of the project. Many of the limitations that we had previously identified may not be as prominent as we previously thought. Use the goals of the community to drive the project rather than limiting the possibilities based on perceived challenges.

**There are more allies in the community.** This project has a lot of potential and people are excited for the future. Further networking and coalition building will be invaluable. Support may come from unexpected places. Many activists, agency workers, and community leaders have a personal connection to the area and the history of this project.

## CONSTRAINTS FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

As with any public project, but especially a project focused on community-led direction and restitution, thorough public engagement is essential from the early stages through implementation. However, due to the short timeframe of the magpie planning team's involvement and the longer timeline of the Fremont Bridgehead Reclamation project, the team determined that broader engagement was not appropriate at this stage. Authentic, equitable engagement takes a lot of time and trust-building between the project team and the community would be essential. The team also heard from several people, including residents, that requests for public participation in the community have soared in recent years and the community may be suffering from "engagement fatigue." As such, community members may not be interested in giving feedback on a project at this stage.

Although magpie planning was not the right group to lead public engagement, it will be important for ENA to build excitement around the project and start to build a coalition. One way to build a strong support base is to partner with community-based organizations who can rally their member base and advocate for the participation of marginalized and underserved populations. Additional organizations and allies are included in Appendix A.



# 06. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Another step in the process was to utilize the previous steps in creating an evaluation framework with which to guide the selection of recommendations for advancement. The team created a list of themes and goals suggested by the Round 1 Interviews, data provided by the project site analysis, demographics of the project site area, foundational goals identified by the client, and community goals proposed by previous community-led visioning processes. We determined recommendations needed to fall in at least one of the following categories:

## **Provides Economic Opportunity**

- Prioritizes economic benefits for current or previously displaced members of the community
- Ensures that profits from redevelopment remain in the neighborhood
- Provides opportunities for small businesses or builds community capacity

## **Connectivity and Transit Access**

- Increases neighborhood walkability and strengthens the street grid
- Improves transit connections and increases access to frequent transit
- Creates more neighborhood destinations, reducing necessity of traveling outside the neighborhood to meet needs

## Environmental Justice

- Ensures climate resilient redevelopment
- Reduces or eliminates disparate negative impacts of climate change based on age, race, or income

## Affordable Housing

- Increases mixed-income housing stock in neighborhood
- Increases housing options (e.g. unit size, location, unit type, tenure)
- Facilitates return of displaced residents to the neighborhood, if desired
- Creates workforce housing for service workers in the neighborhood
- Provides creative opportunities for affordable homeownership

## Community Health Benefits

- Reduces health disparities based on age, race, and income
- Meets basic needs for social determinants of health (economic stability, education access and quality, health care access and quality, neighborhood and built environment, social and community context)
- Considers intersectionality and lived experiences

## Racial Equity and Social Justice Focus

- Creates mechanisms for restitution for displaced community members
- Prevents additional displacement due to investment and redevelopment
- Allows current and displaced residents to thrive in place
- Encourages community-led development and involvement

## Feasibility

- Garneres political and community support
- Technically possible, given regulations and site constraints
- Possible to complete with reasonable resources
- Accessible with existing financial tool



## 07. CASE STUDIES

Within the past 30 years, urban freeway removal has increased as a means of prioritizing new development, and more recently, community revitalization. Since the 1990s, more than 20 highway segments have been removed from downtowns, urban waterfronts, and neighborhoods. The movement has gained national attention, and an influx of federal funds has made these efforts increasingly feasible. These case studies can offer additional lessons, best practices,

and hope for the possibility of this project. While there are no set answers or pathways to success, case studies can serve as a starting point in the conversation about the future of the Fremont Bridgehead. Additional case studies offer examples and justifications for redevelopment tools and programmatic alternatives within the project area. These case studies inform our final list of long-term recommendations for the project.

# COMPLETED PROJECTS

## HARBOR DRIVE TO TOM MCCALL PARK – HARBOR DRIVE FREEWAY | PORTLAND, OR

While urban freeway removal is a growing trend today, Portland paved the way, being the first city to initiate the idea of freeway demolition. The Harbor Drive freeway was a three mile long, ground-level freeway that ran along the Willamette River; it was built in 1942 and carried more than 20,000 vehicles on a daily basis. As

more freeway development took place within Portland, this stretch of the highway became less important to the daily haul of the city. In the late 1960s, Governor Tom McCall pledged his support for the beautification of the banks of the river—envisioning parks and green spaces for Portlanders. After exploring multiple alternatives, the Riverfront for Citizens Coalition called for a park and boulevard option, opting to close Harbor Drive with the support of the governor.<sup>39</sup> The removal of the freeway allowed for the creation of over 70 acres of riverfront park and resulted in the many riverfront developments over the years.



*Harbor Drive Freeway (Reclaiming Old West Broad Street)*



*Tom McCall Park (KOIN)*

## INNER LOOP TRANSFORMATION PLAN | ROCHESTER, NY

The Inner Loop Transformation Plan is a professional plan prepared for the City of Rochester to transform the remaining segment of Rochester's Inner Loop—an Urban Renewal freeway project—into an at-grade multimodal corridor that reconnects Rochester's Downtown to its northern neighborhoods. The Inner Loop was built from 1952 to 1965 destroying hundreds of buildings including homes, offices, churches, hotels, public buildings, parks and factories. By 1991, the City started contemplating removal of the southeastern portion of the Inner Loop as part of their Vision 2000 Plan. In 2001, the City secured federal funding to evaluate various alternatives to the inner loop and determined removing the segment was feasible. By 2014, the previous plans and studies culminated in securing a \$17 million federal grant to fill in the southeastern portion. The Inner Loop East Transformation project was completed in 2017, and as of early 2020, has acted as a catalyst for more than \$200 million in investment.<sup>40</sup> In 2020, the City was awarded State funding to conduct a planning study to assess removal of the remaining sections of the Inner Loop. This case study offers an example of a long-range planning effort that should be replicated for the Fremont Bridgehead Project, if grant funds are awarded.



*Inner Loop East 2012 to 2022  
(Google Maps street view)*



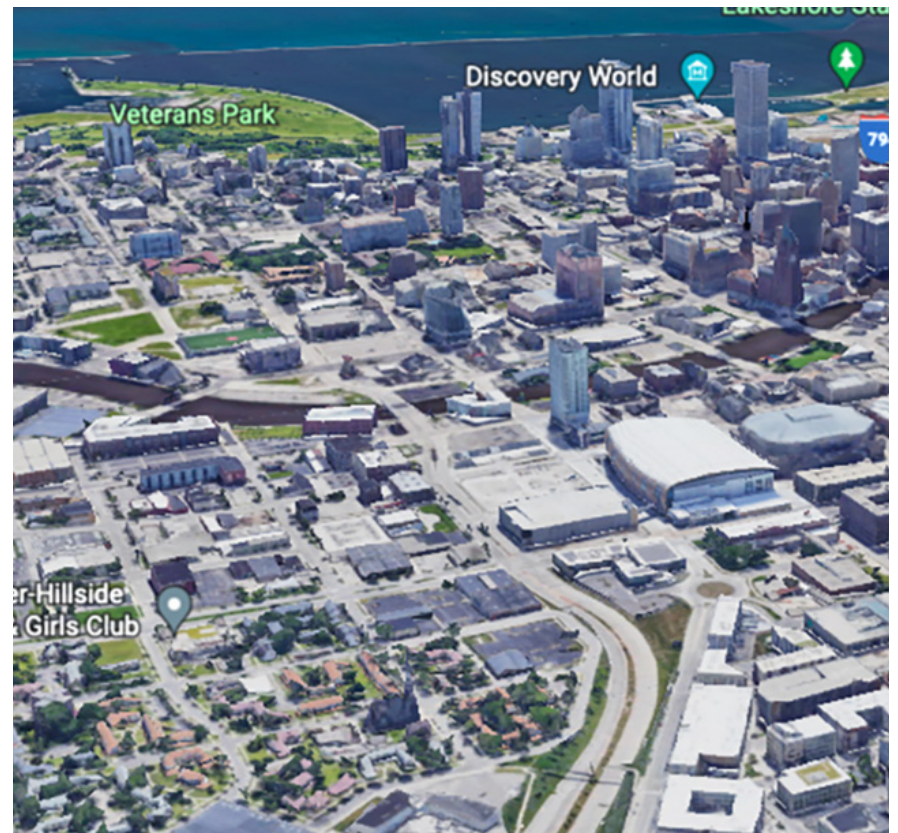
## PARK EAST FREEWAY REMOVAL | MILWAUKEE, WI

The Park East Freeway was an unfinished freeway that existed as part of a 1960's plan in Milwaukee. As the Park East Freeway was being built, it met local opposition that culminated in 1972 with the Mayor vetoing the federal highway funds. Only a 0.8 mile segment of highway was completed, creating a spur that extended from I-43 to North Milwaukee Street.



*Park East Freeway before removal (American Planning Association)*

The spur was underutilized, averaging only 54,000 cars on an average weekday. It not only devalued nearby properties, but it also limited access to the downtown core, disrupted the street grid, and caused congestion. By 2002, leaders had come to recognize the highway as a barrier to redevelopment and \$45 million was secured from a variety of sources including federal grant funds and local Tax Increment Financing to remove the freeway. In total, the removal of the freeway opened up 26 acres of land for development, restored the historic street grid, and created three new neighborhoods.<sup>41</sup>



*Park East Freeway after freeway removal (American Planning Association)*



## CURRENT PROJECTS

### RECONNECT SOUTH PARK STATE ROUTE 99 | SEATTLE, WA

A community-led initiative to remove or transform a 1-mile stretch of Highway 99 through the South Park neighborhood of Seattle, was recently awarded a \$1.6 million Reconnecting Communities grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to fund technical analysis and community engagement.<sup>42</sup> This was supplemented by a matching award of \$600,000 from the Washington legislature.

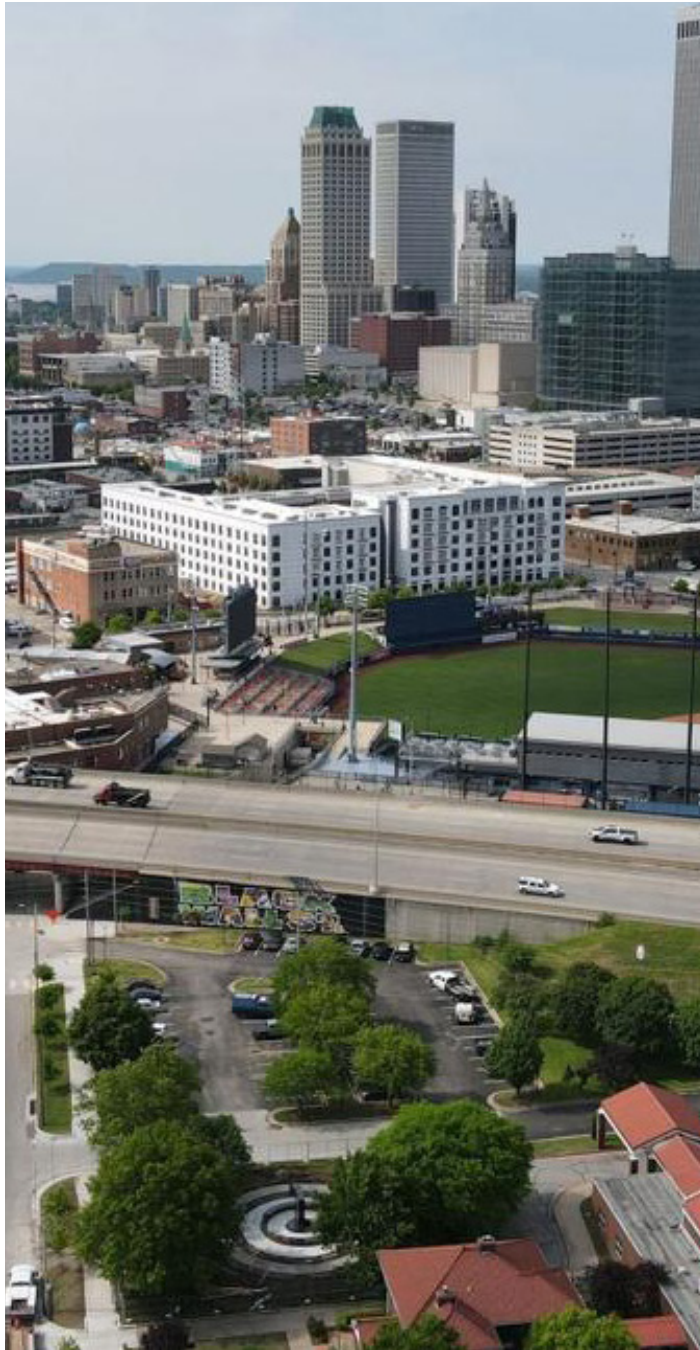


South Park Park existing conditions (The Seattle Times)

The movement was started by a grassroots, resident-led, asset-based community development organization, Cultivate South Park, and received technical assistance from the City of Seattle and Office of Planning & Community Development. The project was part of the Justice 40 Accelerator, which shares information, resources, and capacity with cohorts of frontline community organizations to support them as they formulate projects and successfully apply to the federal funding opportunities presented by the Justice40 Initiative. Identifying allies nationally, locally, within City staff, and on the council were integral to moving the project forward and securing grant funding.



Reconnect South Park vision (Reconnect South Park)



*Greenwood Neighborhood, past and present (top) and Aerial view of I-244 (left) (Transform Tulsa)*

## INNER DISPERSAL LOOP-I-244 | TULSA, OK

Interstate 244 runs directly through Tulsa’s Greenwood District—otherwise known as the historic Black Wall Street. In 1942, Greenwood was home to 242 Black-owned businesses, spread over 35 square blocks; the highway reduced this number to only a handful.

Today, the I-244 forms part of a series of highways known as the Inner Dispersal Loop which acts as a physical and social barrier between a predominantly Black part of Tulsa, historic Greenwood, and the

downtown. However, a community-led effort to remove part of the loop is underway and has hopes of restoring the community and neighborhood that was once there. The North Peoria Church of Christ recently won \$1.6 million from the Reconnecting Communities Grant, beating out the Oklahoma Department of Transportation and Oklahoma City. The funds will be used to support a feasibility study as well as establishing a community land trust.

## RECONNECT RONDO | ST PAUL, MN

During the 1950s, I-94 was built through the middle of the Rondo neighborhood in St Paul displacing 700 homes and 300 businesses according to the nonprofit Reconnect Rondo.<sup>44</sup> Similar to urban renewal projects in Portland, the construction of I-94 devastated the once thriving community of Rondo, where half of St Paul's Black residents once lived.

The goal of the project is to build a land bridge over I-94 which would reconnect the Black community still living there and provide opportunity for 13 acres of public space, 576 new housing units, 108,000 square feet of retail space, and an African American cultural enterprise district first imagined in 2015 by the Rondo Roundtable initiative.<sup>45</sup> The idea of the land bridge was first proposed in 2009 with a feasibility study completed in 2020 and \$6.2 million in predevelopment funding from the Minnesota Legislature. The next steps are to complete master planning and financing over the next couple years, then design and finally construction in the 2026-2030 timeframe.



Land bridge rendering, design by Melo and visuals by James and an illustration of the land bridge concept (ReConnect Rondo)



# 08. PROJECT PHASES & RECOMMENDATIONS

## PROJECT PHASES/IMPLEMENTATION

As many of the case studies demonstrated, these generational projects are best handled in a phased approach, and this project reflects a similar method. A phased approach best allocates the limited capacity of ENA and provides a roadmap for actionable items. Immediate term actions will focus on “softer” elements of moving the project forward, while Medium and Long term actions will then focus on land use and redevelopment alternatives.

Figure 19. Roadmap of Recommendations

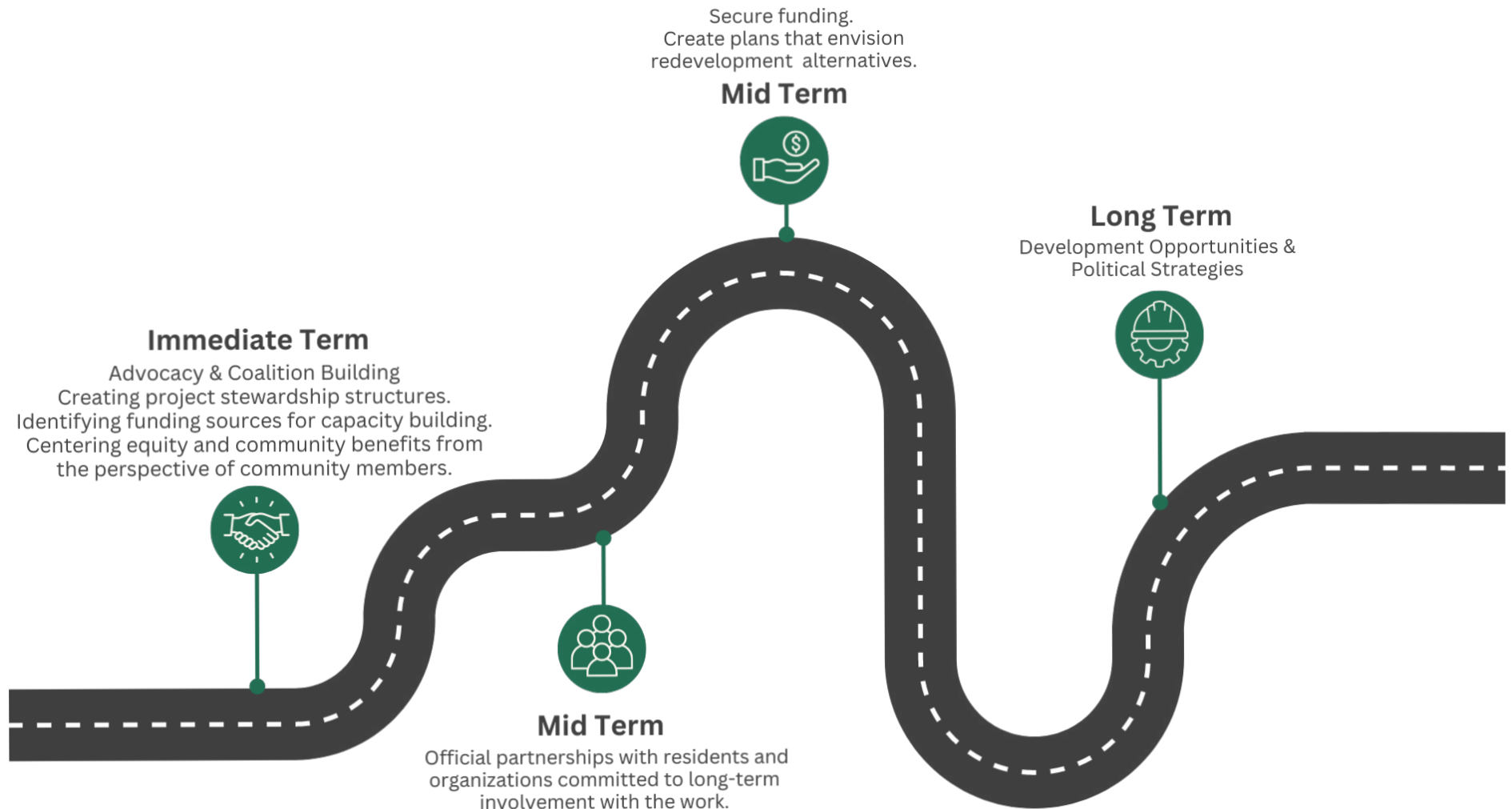
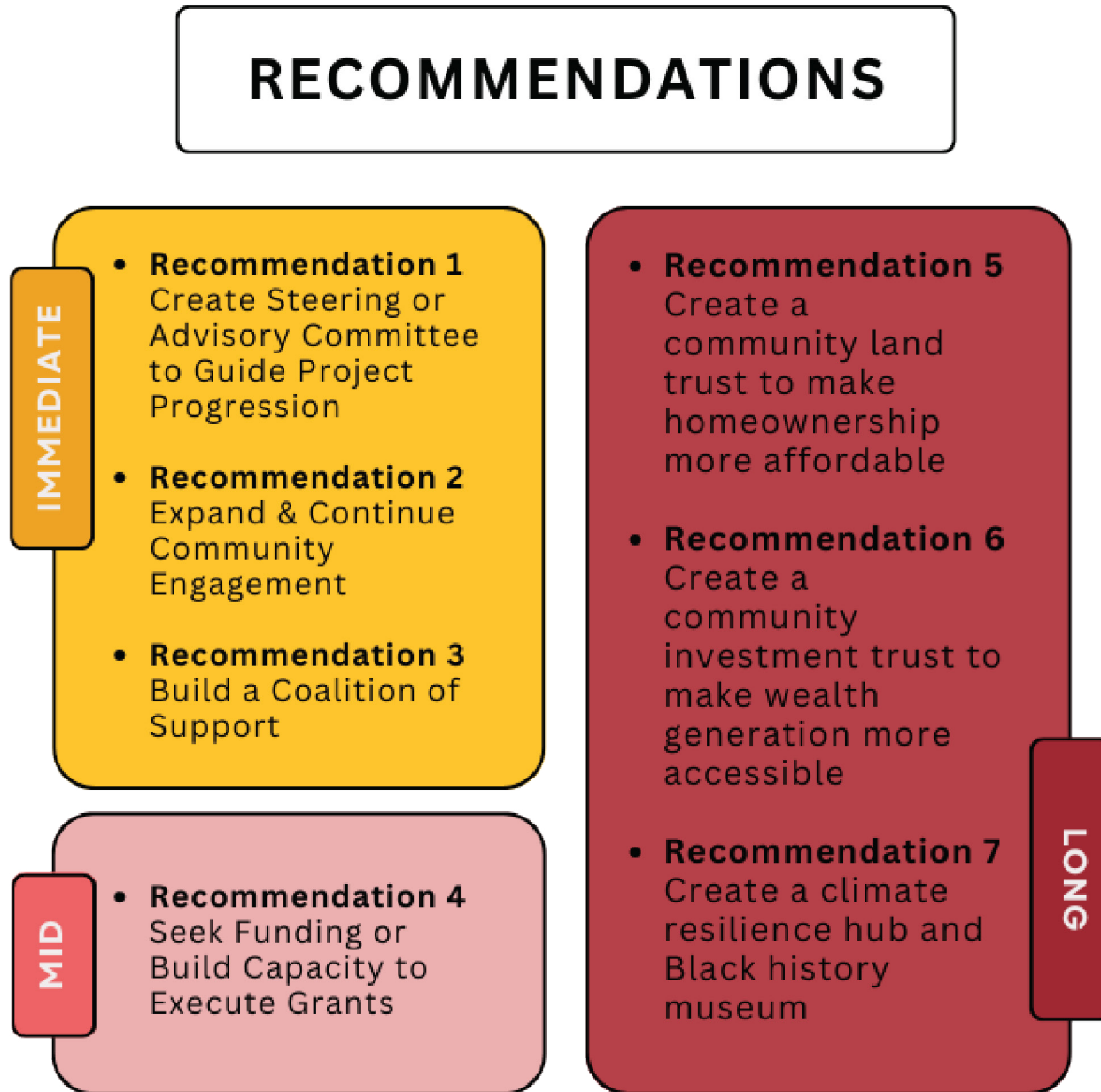


Figure 20. Recommendations



## RECOMMENDATIONS

Each portion of the process has informed the recommendations worth advancing at this stage in the project lifecycle. Round 1 feedback informed the elements of our evaluation framework. The results of our evaluation framework then informed discussion points in Round 2 of engagement. The results of Round 2 engagement ultimately led to these recommendations.

Recommendations fall into three time categories: **immediate term, medium term, and long term.**

Immediate term recommendations are focused on near-term advocacy and coalition building; Medium term is focused on securing funding and creating plans that envision redevelopment attributes and alternatives; the long term is focused around development opportunities and political strategies. While further visioning work necessitates progress in all stages, the separation of time periods best identifies the timeline for actionability by ENA or other project champions. This includes systems for project stewardship and decision making via a steering committee, and capacity building via funding identification. Immediate term actions are essential for turning a grassroots idea into an initiative with broad-based participation.

Medium and Long term actions will then focus on land use and redevelopment alternatives. This portion is focused on steps that will determine a vision for the area and tools to achieve desired community outcomes. These alternatives are informed by community desires, case studies, and City of Portland planning goals.

Near-term advocacy and coalition building is specifically focused on creating project stewardship structures, identifying funding sources for capacity building and further planning/design work, and centering equity and community benefits from the perspective of community members. Recommendations in the immediate and medium term rely on continued community engagement and official partnerships with residents and organizations committed to long-term involvement with the work. Redevelopment attributes and alternatives recommended consider both specific assets and programmatic interventions that are desired on redeveloped land.

Across all stages, the assumption stands that the Kerby Ave I-405 ramps will be altered or removed entirely. It is recommended that project leadership remain agnostic to these stages largely due to the fact that technical feasibility may be the driving factor of this outcome.

## IMMEDIATE TERM

Immediate term recommendations encompass actions that should be taken in the near-term. They seek to lay the groundwork for the future of the project and create a pathway to the recommendations in the medium and long term. These steps represent a fundamental part of the planning process and will play an essential role in moving this project forward. They also play a key role in beginning to achieve some of the initial goals and priorities previously identified through engagement processes in the community.

### Goals

- Raise awareness and build excitement for the future of the project that is intended to provide resources for a thriving community
- Gain allies and community support
- Begin planning for future recommendations



Advocacy in Action (OCLC)

IMMEDIATE

- **Recommendation 1**  
Create Steering or Advisory Committee to Guide Project Progression
- **Recommendation 2**  
Expand & Continue Community Engagement
- **Recommendation 3**  
Build a Coalition of Support



# RECOMMENDATION 1. CREATE STEERING OR ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO GUIDE PROJECT PROGRESSION

**Involve community leaders, engaged and historically excluded residents, and technical experts in an official, ongoing capacity to guide the project direction and establish and commit to shared values.**

A steering committee functions as a body that guides a project towards predetermined goals and objectives. It is often made up of representatives of key organizations who are partners in the project and have expertise that will lend itself to the forward movement of the project and its stated objectives in the form of advice, technical knowledge, and lived experience. They also provide support and an equity-focused oversight. A steering committee for the Fremont Bridgehead Project should include a diverse set of stakeholders; representatives from CBOs, government agencies, ENA, and Boise and Eliot residents. Members of the committee should bring varied experience and have diverse identities representative of the community & intentionally incorporate Black community members and leaders. These participants should be compensated for their participation and expertise.

**Timeframe:** Near-term. Should be considered the next step for the project.

**Key Partners:** Leaders from local CBOs, civically-involved residents, and public agency representatives to the degree their involvement is appropriate.

**Action Items:**

- 1. Engage with key partners and secure commitments for steering committee participation.
- 2. Define goals for the committee and metrics for success.
- 3. Create an equity framework and governance agreement.



*Portland Clean Energy Fund (PCEF) engagement (Cascadia Partners)*

# RECOMMENDATION 2. EXPAND AND CONTINUE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO GUIDE PROJECT PROGRESSION

Continuous and extensive community engagement should be prioritized throughout the planning process, with different events and opportunities for participation.

While we began the process of engagement with stakeholders, engagement with residents of the area—particularly the Black community—is an essential next step. This provides an opportunity for increased awareness, community-buy in, and an understanding of the values that this project should embody. Gaining community support and visioning allows the project to gain an identity and voice, making it more marketable and compelling to elected officials and other political allies who could move the project forward. Our recommendation includes a living list of engagement events and strategies, listed below in Action Items.



Albina Vision Trust (AVT)

**Timeframe:** Throughout the project lifetime; to begin immediately.

**Key Partners:** Community-based organizations (CBOs), Boise Neighborhood Association, Albina Vision Trust, Local businesses/ business districts.

### Action Items:

- 1. Partner with CBOs to join scheduled events and further present the concept to community members. Provide opportunities for feedback, goals, and questions.
- 2. Schedule site walks to familiarize stakeholders and community members with the site and envision what could exist instead, with different community partners leading the site walks.
- 3. Begin a community visioning process to develop guiding principles & community needs.



Metro Booth at Powwow (Metro)

### RECOMMENDATION 3. BUILD A COALITION OF SUPPORT

Continuing engagement with local CBOs, small businesses, and other institutions is essential to project success.

Maintaining existing relationships and support for the project while also broadening the project’s appeal and connecting with new allies is vital for momentum-building grassroots support efforts. The Fremont Bridgehead Project should reach out to CBOs that have not yet been contacted as well as local business owners—a group that has not yet been engaged—to introduce the project idea and generate support.

Beyond local partners, national partners should be engaged to amplify the reach of the project and generate attention. National non-profits and media publications with aligning values can act as messaging partners without co-opting the local voice and driving forces behind the project.

**Timeframe:** Near-term. Throughout the project timeline; to begin immediately.

**Key Partners:** There are possible alignments with national groups such as Freeway Fighters, the Congress for New Urbanism, and Placemaking US. The Freeway Fighters Network is well connected with similar efforts around the country and can provide unique insight into strategic considerations moving forward. Local partners will be determined by extensive networking and project presentations to new organizations.

**Action Items:**

- 1. Shift coalition-building focus away from agency staff and towards local CBOs, small businesses, and national organizations.
- 2. Continue introducing the project to new organizations.
- 3. Maintain a mailing list for bi-annual project updates or requests for support at critical junctures in the project.



MID

- **Recommendation 4**  
Seek Funding or  
Build Capacity to  
Execute Grants

## MID TERM

Medium term recommendations encompass actions that should be taken after short-term recommendations, approximately one year after short-term recommendations are pursued. These recommendations are estimated to be useful between years 1 and 3 of the project lifecycle. They serve as an important goal and vital step towards realizing alterations to the Kerby Avenue ramps.

### Goals

- Continue to build excitement for the project
- Build capacity within the organization and identify key partners outside of the project
- Begin planning for future recommendations

## RECOMMENDATION 4. SEEK FUNDING OR BUILD CAPACITY TO EXECUTE GRANTS

**Assemble the expertise to apply for grant funding, and time the application based on measurable project support.**

Grant funding opportunities such as USDOT’s Reconnecting Communities Grant and Justice 40 can provide monies to organized community initiatives such as the Fremont Bridgehead Project. Grant awards are generally designated for specific uses, such as technical feasibility studies and planning work. Additional opportunities including the ODOT/DLCD Transportation and Growth Management Program can provide funds that support integrated land use and transportation planning. The Portland Clean Energy Fund (PCEF), can provide small dollar grants that support environmentally-focused components of the project or larger planning grants approved by City Council.

Case studies and comparable community-led projects, such as Reconnect South Park in Seattle, leveraged a Federal USDOT Reconnecting Communities Grant award to secure additional funding from the Washington State Legislature. This strategy can be replicated for the Fremont Bridgehead Reclamation Project, and is a potential way to win support from elected officials.

**Timeframe:** Medium-term. Should begin after the Steering Committee is assembled and a plan is established for crafting a strong application.

**Key Partners:** Steering Committee members, CBO partners with grant writing experience.

### Action Items:

1. Select the first grant the committee will apply for based on timelines and applicability.
2. Assemble steering committee members and community partners willing to collaborate on grant writing.



*Justice 40 can bring funding to the project for capacity-building  
(UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation)*

- **Recommendation 5**  
Create a community land trust to make homeownership more affordable
- **Recommendation 6**  
Create a community investment trust to make wealth generation more accessible
- **Recommendation 7**  
Create a climate resilience hub and Black history museum

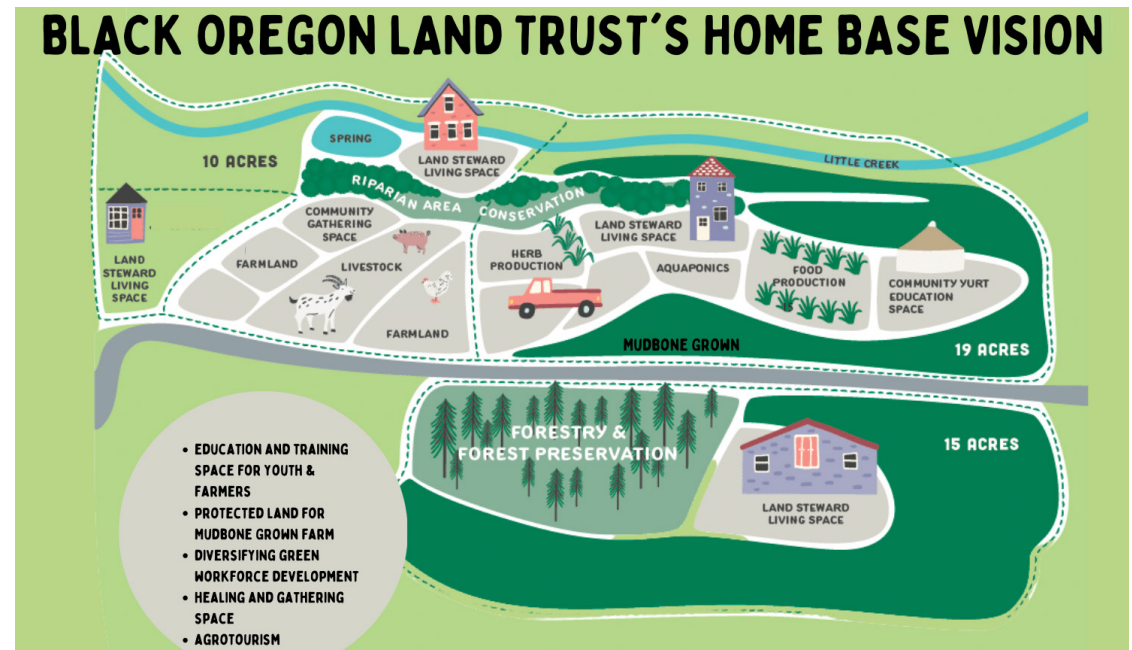
LONG

## LONG TERM

These recommendations serve as future considerations and potential programmatic options for addressing community needs in the area. They are not to be actively pursued for the first few years of the project, but are worth discussing with the steering committee and residents to signal commitment to addressing shared goals for the project.

## Goals

- Continue to build excitement for the project
- Build capacity within the organization and identify key partners outside of the project
- Begin planning for future recommendations



Community Land Trust drawing (Black Oregon Land Trust)

## **RECOMMENDATION 5. CREATE A COMMUNITY LAND TRUST TO MAKE HOMEOWNERSHIP MORE AFFORDABLE**

**Provide permanently affordable home ownership opportunities to community members displaced from Albina by Urban Renewal or gentrification.**

A Community Land Trust (CLT) model offers a unique opportunity for long-term housing affordability and stability while facilitating homeownership for lower-income households. A CLT separates the ownership of a piece of land from the home that sits atop it. A household will purchase the physical structure, while a non-profit agency will own the land and lease it to the homeowners for a nominal price. By separating the ownership of land from the improvements upon it, homes can be sold far below market price. One of the greatest strengths of the CLT model is the creation of permanently affordable housing.

**Timeframe:** Long-term. This recommendation is valuable to keep in mind when discussing redevelopment outcomes and goals for the project area, but execution of this recommendation is years away.

**Key Partners:** Local organizations such as Proud Ground can be a natural partner to the project depending on the housing typologies developed in the project area. Proud Ground organizationally does not lead development themselves, but instead partner with homebuyers via down-payment assistance at time of purchase under the conditions that the purchased unit will be added to the Proud Ground CLT. This organizational capacity and CLT structure would be beneficial to identifying and working with Black and African-American home buyers interested in owning a home in the project area. A land trust could be paired with other housing development strategies that prioritize housing supply or investment opportunities.

### **Action Items:**

1. Incorporate CLT into results of visioning and potential redevelopment outcomes when talking about the project.
2. Maintain contact with Proud Ground and inform them of project progress.
3. Engage with Portland Housing Bureau about opportunities to leverage existing N/NE preference policy.

## **RECOMMENDATION 6. CREATE A COMMUNITY INVESTMENT TRUST TO MAKE WEALTH GENERATION MORE ACCESSIBLE**

**Create opportunities for community wealth building and shared ownership of a neighborhood asset in the project area.**

The Community Investment Trust (CIT) was originally an initiative of MercyCorps, the Portland based nonprofit. The first CIT was created for Plaza 122, a single-storied commercial retail building in east Portland. The CIT creates a low dollar value (\$10-100/month) and loss-protected investment opportunity for community members to build long-term communal ownership and wealth generation. Investors in the CIT are required to attend a six-hour financial education course covering budgeting and financial literacy. Investors generate wealth through property value increases, decreases in the loan value over time, and an annual dividend when there is profit from tenant payments. Investors are protected through a direct pay letter of credit from a bank which allows them to liquidate their investment at any time without penalty.

The benefits of a CIT go beyond a small-dollar investment opportunity for local residents—the associated financial literacy and investment education required for all investors can have spillover effects that promote wealth building via other assets. ENA Board Members and others have expressed an interest in investment vehicles for Black folks when redevelopment occurs, and this strategy is one way to address that desire. The Boise/

Eliot community can determine the type of development they would like to invest in via a trust (retail, market-rate residential, etc.). Additionally, a sense of neighborhood pride and increased civic involvement is associated with community ownership of real estate that serves the neighborhood.

**Timeframe:** Long-term. This recommendation is valuable to keep in mind when discussing redevelopment outcomes and goals for the project area, but execution of this recommendation is years away.

**Key Partners:** MercyCorps and their Community Investment Trust organization. The Fremont Bridgehead Project team can gain insight into the process of creating a Community Investment Trust and the potential constraints of the model by collaborating with them.

### **Action Items:**

1. Incorporate CIT into results of visioning and potential redevelopment outcomes when talking about the project.
2. Maintain contact with MercyCorps/Community Investment Trust and inform them of project progress.



## **RECOMMENDATION 7. CREATE A CLIMATE RESILIENCE HUB WITH REGULAR PROGRAMMING AND A BLACK HISTORY MUSEUM**

**Provide a climate resilient space for communities, allowing for them to build capacity, coordinate critical services, and even provide year-round programming during non-emergency periods that honors and celebrates the history of the neighborhood.**

A climate resilience hub is a neighborhood center that is designed to help residents prepare for and respond to emergency events, including public health incidents and natural disasters. Climate resilience hubs facilitate emergency communication and services, aid in resource distribution, provide backup energy and food resources, and can serve as a shelter during and after emergencies, like wildfires, extreme weather events, and earthquakes. Outside of emergency times, they can be utilized to support day-to-day programming and act as centers of care, teaching and empowering residents beyond disaster preparedness. First and foremost, a climate resilience hub must be a safe and trusted space within the community. Cultural connection and accessibility across age, ability, and identity are essential community members are going to turn to the hub in times of emergency.

**Timeframe:** Depending on the scale, medium to long-term. This recommendation is valuable to keep in mind when discussing redevelopment outcomes and goals for the project area, but execution of this recommendation is years away. It can also be combined with another recommendation like a Black History or Cultural Museum to continue to build value and celebrate Black joy and excellence.

**Key Partners:** There are several organizations in the Portland area that are focused on supporting climate resilient communities, including the Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization, Depave, and the Institute for Sustainable Solutions. Additionally, partners that may also have a shared vision, like the Portland Harbor Community Coalition.

### **Action Items:**

1. Identify a current building, like Harriet-Tubman Elementary school, after its relocation, that can be transformed into a hub and year-round community gathering space.
2. Identify unique site and construction needs prior to any redevelopment of the area (gray water storage tanks, garden-ready plots, reliable off-grid power).
3. Explore funding opportunities specific to community-resilience project retrofitting, like the Portland Clean Energy Fund.
4. Connect with local mural artists who can work alongside the community creating and visualizing a way to bring a shared vision to life.

# CONCEPTUAL SITE REDEVELOPMENT

The map below shows potential additions and new uses at the site. It shows a possible shortening/truncation of the ramps, connections to main corridors through increased pedestrian pathways, and identified land for future development. This is one example of how the site could evolve and serves as a starting point for creating a vision for the future.

Figure 21. Potential Changes to the Site



## FUNDING STRATEGY & FEASIBILITY

The future of any of the possible development opportunities will require a deep understanding of the financial limitations and opportunities of such a development. Any potential ramp alteration would require millions of dollars in funds. Ultimately, capital improvement funds from a legislative body (state or local) will serve as the primary source of funding for desired ramp alterations and associated infrastructure development.

In addition to receiving capital improvement funds, a variety of creative and targeted funding sources will be needed to build capacity and support actionable items that can be pursued for the community to propel the project forward. This section offers a list of potential funding sources, including federal grants, TIF funding, and private donations. Our assessment seeks to provide a living document of sources and partners that will support the project into the future.

**Figure 22. List of Funding Organizations**

Potential Funding Partners		
Portland Bureau of Transportation	Meyer Memorial Trust	Portland Housing Bureau
Portland Office of Community & Civic Life	Bureau of Planning and Sustainability	Prosper Portland
Oregon Department of Transportation	The 1803 Fund	
Freeway Fighters	Bureau of Environmental Services	
Metro	Albina Vision Trust	

# FUNDING SOURCES

## FEDERAL

### **Reconnecting Communities Grant**

The Reconnecting Communities Grant is a product of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law under the Biden-Harris Administration. The program is centered on reconnecting communities that were harmed, displaced, and disconnected by past transportation-infrastructure decisions. The grant program has been allocated \$1 billion for a five year period and has already granted awards to 45 capital and planning grants across the nation—one of which is in Portland (Albina Vision Trust).

### **Timeline**

The grant has four years remaining, and is set to continue until the year 2026. This is a feasible source of funding for the FBH project, though deciding which year to apply to will need to be a strategic decision.

### **Constraints**

The most realistic barrier exists in actually receiving the funding. In the year 2022, the grant program received over 400 applications from across the country, with the total funding request equaling \$2 billion. A second constraint is that the project may not be far enough in its process to be a competitive applicant for the grant as the timeline is fairly tight. It is our hope that the project will gain support and move quickly, qualifying it as a strong applicant in this process.

## STATE

### **Transportation and Growth Management Program Grants**

TGM Planning Grants are offered through a joint program of DLCD and ODOT. The grants are aimed at helping local jurisdictions plan for better transportation and land use systems that promote livability, sustainability, and economic vitality. The program offers two types of grants, one for Transportation System Planning, and one for Integrated Land Use Planning. Our project could be eligible for a Category 2 grant, as it promotes an innovative land use and transportation project.

### **Timeline**

Grants are awarded on an annual basis and are typically due in July of the application year. Projects typically have a two-year period from award to completion.

### **Constraints**

Because these projects are typically geared towards the creation of updated transportation projects, it is possible that our project proposal may not be relevant enough. Additionally, the fact this is an ODOT program may create a conflict of interest.

## LOCAL

### **Metro Community Placemaking Grant**

The Metro Community Placemaking program offers grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000. Projects that are creative, equity forward, artistic, and that involve and benefit communities of color and other historically marginalized communities are the focus of this program.

### **Timeline**

Awards are granted on an annual basis with applications opening in the beginning of August. There is currently no stated end date for funding, though this may change depending on funding availability.

### **Constraints**

Uses for the grant money are generally tied to planning efforts, rather than capital improvements. This will be beneficial for building support or programming efforts post construction, but may not be the best source of funding for the physical changes of the ramps.

### **Tax-Increment Financing and the Interstate Corridor Urban Renewal District**

Tax Increment Financing is a common urban development tool used throughout the U.S. In Portland, TIF Districts are managed by Prosper Portland. When TIF Districts are created in areas a city deems as “blighted,” increases in tax revenue from the district as a result of development activity is reinvested in the district via capital improvement projects. This funding source aligns well with the necessary infrastructure projects in the project area.

## LEGISLATURE

The largest source of funding available, and ultimately the key to project financing, is money designated to the project via legislative bodies. A combination of funds from the State and City will likely be required to realize the vision of land reclamation. These funds will be tied to the capital improvements necessary for ramp reconfiguration and land platting.

### **Timeline**

Funds from the legislature can be pursued at any time, though it is advisable that they are pursued with tact and when the project vision and support are strongest.

### **Constraints**

There is a requirement for strong community/grassroots support and legislative project champions. This combination of public enthusiasm and elected leadership support is required in the current political environment to win project funding. A major constraint remains, that there has also been considerable harm caused by these projects in the past, so while this remains an option, it is not one that should be considered lightly and would be greatly served by bringing to the Steering Committee before considering applying for funding.

# 09.

## CONCLUSION

The Fremont Bridgehead, the Kerby Avenue ramps, and the adjacent land uses are reminders of a painful history brought upon the folks that lived in Albina many years ago. The construction of the Legacy Emanuel Medical Center and the freeways through North and Northeast Portland had a devastating effect on the Boise/Eliot neighborhood, especially to the Black Portlanders who called the area home. This mass displacement through Urban Renewal resulted in a disconnected Boise and Eliot and the destruction of Black wealth and community assets. Furthermore, recent reinvestment and gentrification in the neighborhood has further added to the harm caused to Black folks in the community.

With emerging opportunities both around the country and here in Oregon to address past harms perpetuated by public actors, the Fremont Bridgehead Reclamation Project presents the opportunity to achieve this goal in the Boise/Eliot neighborhoods. Through multiple rounds of engagement, our team has advanced the project with public agencies and community organizations, many of which intend on partnering or supporting the project in the years to come. Stakeholder insight and our evaluation framework came together to result in 7 recommendations for the project team to pursue in the years ahead. Implementation begins with the immediate creation of a steering committee, then continued coalition building and community resident engagement. Medium-term and long-term recommendations will be implemented in the future.

# 10.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A. ADDITIONAL STAKEHOLDERS & POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Additional Stakeholders		
Boise Neighborhood Association	NAACP Portland	Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA)
Self Enhancement Inc.	UNITE Oregon	
Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church	Portland: Neighbors Welcome	American Indian Movement in Eliot
OPAL Environmental Justice	Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods	Soul Business Association
Immaculate Heart Catholic Church	Right 2 Root	Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives (PCRI)
Urban League of Portland	Community Investment Trust	

## APPENDIX B. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK SCORING MECHANISM

The scoring methodology that we implemented explored the scalar nature of these criteria; ranging from not meeting the criteria at all to excelling at these goals. We gave each recommendation a score between -2 and +2 for the corresponding criteria and then added up the scores to narrow down the recommendations continuing forward in the process. We have placed icons in the far right column to demonstrate what our team's alternatives would be for the final stages of our process.

### **Negative 2:**

Significant changes, resources, or support required to complete. OR  
Has a disproportionately negative impact on the community and surrounding area

### **Negative 1:**

Could lead to some potential negative impacts, though can be mitigated, or not seen as a significant enough benefit to the community

### **Zero:**

Has no significant implications to the area or community, but is rather innocuous.

### **Positive 1:**

Could lead to some potential positive impacts, though would require additional resources. May be seen as a significant benefit to the community but still to be seen.

### **Positive 2:**

Significant positive community impact that meets foundational and community goals, or leads to opportunities that can have positive impact on the community or surrounding area

Based on the total scores, there will be 4-5 recommendations that the team will select and assign an icon to:

Green = Eligible to move forward

Yellow = Posposed to later project phases

Red = Not a priority currently, or potential for negative impact



## APPENDIX C. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

	Evaluation Criteria							Scoring	
	Economic Opportunity	Connectivity & Transit Access	Environmental Justice	Affordable Housing	Community Health Benefits	Racial Equity & Justice	Feasibility	Total Score	Priority
<b>Immediate Term - Advocacy and Coalition Focus</b>									
1a. Create Steering Committee to ensure racial equity and environmental justice are prioritized	1	1	2	1	1	2	0	<b>8</b>	
1b. Create Technical Committee (i.e., ODOT, PBOT, BPS) to ensure feasibility and connectivity are prioritized	0	2	1	1	0	0	2	<b>6</b>	
1c. Create scalability with another coalition as part of their pipeline (i.e., AVT or Right 2 Root)	0	0	1	0	1	2	2	<b>6</b>	
1d. Write Grant/Seek Funding (i.e., Reconnecting Communities, TGM, PCEF)	1	0	1	1	0	2	1	<b>7</b>	
1e. Compose a Community Benefit Agreement	2	0	2	0	2	2	0	<b>8</b>	
1f. Hand the project off to the City to move forward (i.e., TGM grant)	0	1	0	1	0	-1	2	<b>3</b>	
1g. Hand the project off to a developer to move forward	-2	1	-2	-1	0	-1	2	<b>-3</b>	

	Evaluation Criteria							Scoring	
	Economic Opportunity	Connectivity & Transit Access	Environmental Justice	Affordable Housing	Community Health Benefits	Racial Equity & Justice	Feasibility	Total Score	Priority
<b>Mid to Long Term - Development and Redesign of Land</b>									
2a. Redevelop as open space/park	0	0	2	0	2	2	1	<b>7</b>	
2b. Create Community Resilience Hub to combat climate impacts/extreme heat & generate carbon-offset credits	1	0	2	-1	2	2	1	<b>7</b>	
2c. Reestablish the grid and wider streets for more bicycle connectivity	0	2	1	0	2	1	0	<b>6</b>	
2d. Create a Community Land Trust	1	0	2	2	2	2	1	<b>10</b>	
2e. Community Investment Trust	2	1	0	2	2	2	1	<b>10</b>	
2f. Redevelop as mixed-use housing with WBIPOC-owned businesses	2	0	0	2	0	2	1	<b>7</b>	
2g. Create an arts and culture museum celebrating Boise-Eliot Neighborhoods	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	<b>3</b>	

## APPENDIX D. STEERING COMMITTEE BEST PRACTICES

- Keep the size manageable
  - About 9 members is adequate to represent all parties, 6 is too small, and 12 is too large. Therefore, it might be advantageous to aim for about 10.
  - Typical steering committee roles might include a chairperson or co-chairs, board members, community members, etc.
- Be thoughtful, deliberate, and consider multiple different participants from different sectors.
  - Utilize a stakeholder matrix
    - Consider both informal and formal sources of power in communities

### Example: Stakeholder Matrix

	Government	Nonprofit	Business	Philanthropy	Existing Allies
Steering Committee					
Working Groups					
Interviewees					
Target Populations					

- Clearly define the steering committee mission
  - Ensure that the scope is manageable and clear
  - Define the authority of the committee—director vs advisor
  - Decide on the deliverables—what will the committee produce
- Define the goals and guiding principles
- Establish an equity framework
- Create a steering committee governance agreement
- Regular meetings; some committee meetings should coincide with milestones
- Define ways of measuring success

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