

Reconnect Boise Eliot

Draft Grant Outline | August 2024

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

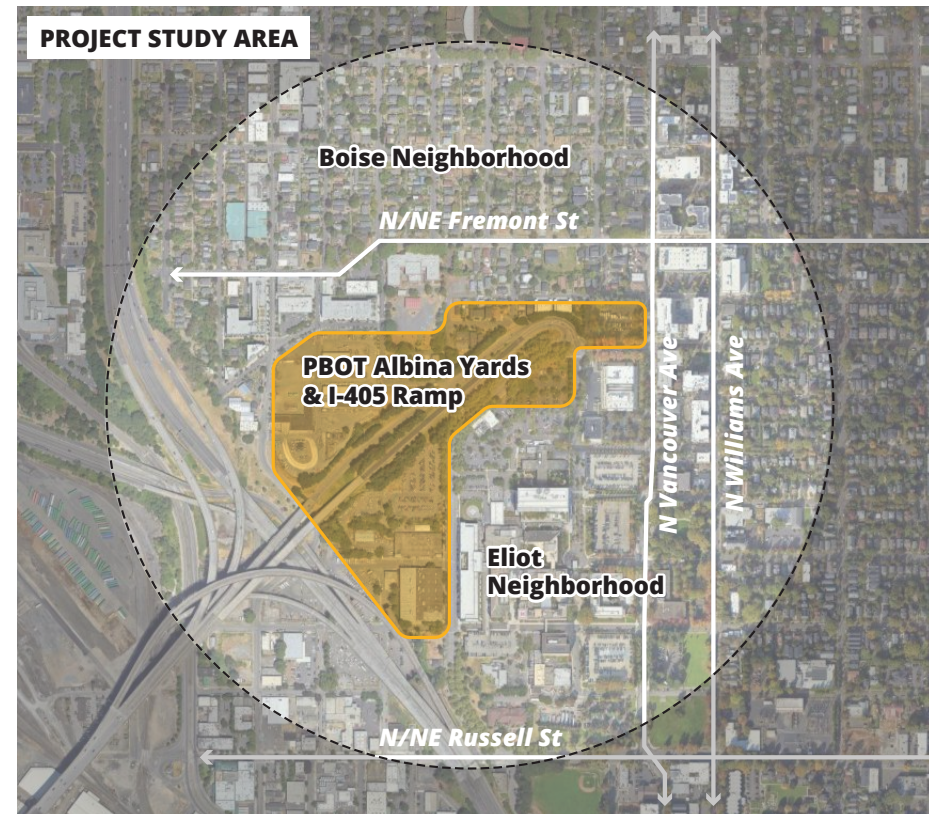
This project seeks to build upon and advance recent efforts to rebuild and restore Portland's Albina neighborhood as a place of connection and opportunity for Black Portlanders.

Before the severe impacts brought by mid-century urban renewal projects, Albina was a thriving and diverse neighborhood that served as the center of Black economic and cultural life. Despite the harms of freeway construction, and major monolithic urban renewal developments, the neighborhood endured a place of Black belonging in Portland. Much has been written about the history of this area – you can find more background and context by reading [Bleeding Albina by Dr Karen Gibson](#) or by reading through a recently completed Portland State University MURP project this focused on this area ([available here](#)).

The *Reconnect Boise Eliot Plan* would follow on the heels of the Reconnecting Albina Planning Project and Albina Vision Community Investment Plan, demonstrating the City of Portland continued and enduring commitment to restorative development in North and Northeast Portland. The study focuses on the PBOT and ODOT owned land currently being used for the Albina Maintenance yards and I-405 Ramp, but also considers broader neighborhood connectivity and land reclamation opportunities.

This project includes a sequence of tasks and phases. The first actions seek to understand the range of possibilities for restorative development in Central Albina in an area that was severely impacted by the building of the Emmanuel Hospital campus and I-405 ramps. Concurrently with feasibility studies, a core City team would work hand in hand with community-based-organizations to develop a vision for future redevelopment.

This proposal would apply for the third and final round of [Reconnecting Communities Planning Grants](#) which are due at the end of September 2024. There is approximately \$150M for planning related activities nationwide through this program. The target amount for this planning grant would be roughly \$1M.



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DRAFT SEQUENCE OF WORK

Initial tasks focus on understanding the realm of possibility for redevelopment within the study area. A key outcome of this work are two feasibility studies – one focused on the future of the PBOT Albina Maintenance Yards the other focused on a range of alternatives for reconfiguring or removing the I-405 ramps accessing N Kerby Ave. Understanding opportunities and constraints will allow for a canvas on which city bureaus and community organizations can develop their vision for the site, with eyes wide open about limitations and feasibility.

Task	Budget
1: PBOT Maintenance Operations Facility Strategy	\$300K
2: I-405 Ramp Reconfiguration Study	\$400K
3: Neighborhood Equitable Development Vision	\$300K
Total	\$1M

Task 1:
PBOT Maintenance Operations
Facility Strategy

Lead: PBOT Maintenance, PBOT Planning

As the primary property owner adjacent the freeway ramps, PBOT will identify its long-term needs, opportunities and challenges, and develop a facility strategy to relocate or reimagine both the upper maintenance yard and Kerby garage (collectively referred here to as the Albina Yards). There are long-standing questions regarding whether to upgrade and/or relocate core function for the PBOT maintenance fleet and central operations. This study would be a collaborative effort between PBOT Planning and Maintenance, centering the needs and perspectives of MO staff. It would identify either a consolidation strategy, partial relocation, or full relocation of MO facilities. A second question to address is what can be done with the remaining land given the development constraints associated with the site (including zoning, environmental, among others).

Task 2:
I-405 Ramp Reconfiguration Study

Lead: ODOT, Emmanuel Hospital, PBOT Planning

The “Kerby Ramps” off I-405 are a legacy structure of the never-built Prescott Freeway which was designed to carve through the Albina neighborhood to create a new limited-access highway from the Central City across Northeast Portland to the Columbia Corridor. Thankfully, this project was never realized. However, these ramps serve as an enduring legacy reminder of some of the worst mistakes of the mid-century. Despite their design however, they have been present in the urban fabric for 50 years and have grown to serve an important purpose for automobile, transit, and emergency vehicle access in Inner N/NE Portland. There is a building community movement in Boise and Eliot to redesign or remove these ramps. However, there is much needed technical and modeling analysis to understand and evaluate a range of capital projects that would alter these ramps and reclaim land for active land uses.

Task 3:
Neighborhood Development
Conceptual Vision

Lead: City of Portland Team (PBOT Lead; includes BPS, Prosper) + Community Organizations

Concurrently with the feasibilities studies outlined in Tasks 1 and Task 2, a core City of Portland team would work in close collaboration with community-based organizations to outline an urban design concept for how reclaimed land could support community-identified development goals for the neighborhood. This product would speak to the goals, outcomes, and development vision for the areas claimed by ramp reconfiguration and relocation/reconfiguration of the PBOT Albina Maintenance yards. While conceptual in nature, this document will serve as a guiding vision for future city-led tasks, similar to the role of Albina Vision Trusts’ Community Investment Plan.