



Portland residents attend a public workshop March 28 at the Rosewood Initiative to discuss challenges facing the black community and develop a framework for the future of East Portland. A similar workshop is scheduled for Saturday.

PHOTOS BY SHANE VALLE

## PUBLIC WORKSHOP

PAALF People's Plan is hosting a public community workshop at 1 p.m. May 2 at Rosewood Initiative. Learn more at [www.pdxpeoplesplan.org](http://www.pdxpeoplesplan.org).

# Creating a livable city for black residents

*Lisa Bates, of the Portland African American Leadership Forum, has high expectations for the People's Plan*

**BY ANN-DERRICK GAILLOT**  
STAFF WRITER

What would Portland look like if city policy were shaped with the experiences and interests of Portland's black community in mind?

That's the question the Portland African American Leadership Forum hopes to explore and answer with the People's Plan. PAALF hopes the plan will be a framework for organizing and advocating to empower black Portlanders to shape city policies and development as Portland continues its rapid change.

PAALF, an organization that gathers the city's black community leaders around public policy issues, is best known for its work in opposing a Trader Joe's development in Northeast Portland last year. Since then, the group has been working on the People's Plan and is now in the community involvement stage that is so crucial to what PAALF hopes will unite and amplify the interests of black Portlanders surrounding issues of equity in education, housing, health care, arts and culture,

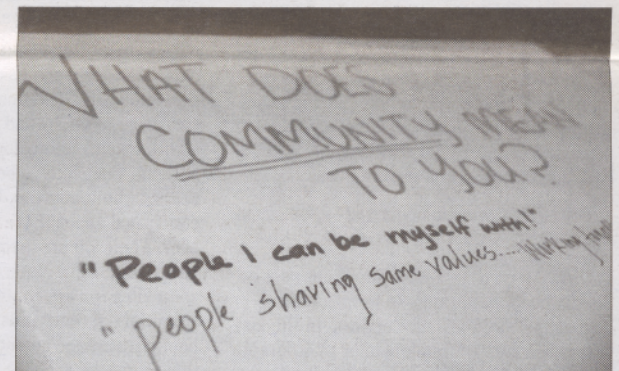
environmental sustainability and economic development.

Despite the fact that development of the plan is still in its early stages, it is already drawing comparison to the failed Albina Community Plan, adopted by the city in 1993, which promised to combat disinvestment in the Albina neighborhood and provide resources for property owners.

Today, the shadow of the Albina Plan places added pressure on the People's Plan to transform a place recently declared the fastest gentrifying city in America by *Governing* magazine.

Lisa Bates, a professor of planning and urban studies as well as black studies at Portland State University, is the policy research manager and has high expectations for how the plan, if executed correctly, could make Portland a more accessible and livable city for its nearly 40,000 black residents who live with memories of repeated displacement.

Only time will reveal how the People's Plan will shape up, but Bates sat down with *Street Roots* to share PAALF's vision for Portland's future and the progress they've



Participants at the March 28 workshop shared their thoughts about the meaning of community.

made on the People's Plan thus far.

**Ann-Derrick Gaillot:** *I was hoping you could explain what the People's Plan is in your own words to someone who has never heard of it.*

**Lisa Bates:** The goal of the People's Plan is to use the concepts of urban planning that we see in Portland all the time and specifically ask what would that look like if we did that with black people in mind, trying to prioritize not just the policy problems that black people face, like affordable-housing problems and educational attainment and jobs, but to actually try to create a really positive vision of the future that asks a question of what Portland would be like for black people if it really was for black people. What would it be like? What would your neighborhood be like if you felt that your neighborhood as a space, as a community, loved black people?

One of the other goals that we have in the People's Plan is to try to lift up not just a conversation about Northeast Portland and gentrification in Northeast Portland, but