

# I-5 Scar of Displacement Revisited

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received,” she said. “We want to acknowledge the harm that was done to the Black community.”

Channell said ODOT has done focus groups with members of the African American community and wants to make changes to reflect those public statements and the ideas of Albina Vision Trust.

“We would welcome them back to the table,” she said. “Their voices are important.”

In response to Albina Vision, Channell said ODOT has hired an independent consultant to look at the best use for highway

covers through a community process.

“Everything is on the table,” Channell said. “We are focused on working with the community on the design and will produce development scenarios with the board, and then it will go up to the executive steering committee.”

But before any decisions are made, community input will again be invited, Channell said, and the steering committee will direct workshops, starting soon, with the hope that a decision will be made by July about just what will go on the highway covers.

ODOT is already reaching out to community-based organizations about the work-

shops for “a targeted outreach to maximize historic Albina voices through online tactics,” Channell said. Information will be available on the ODOT website, Oregon.gov/ODOT, in about two weeks, she added.

“This is truly a shift in the way ODOT does business,” she said. “It’s not our typical way of operating, but this is an opportunity, a catalyst as an agency as well.”

In addition to construction, ODOT also wants to encourage long-term economic development, Channell said, especially for small and minority-owned contractors.

“Our goal is to set up job opportunities in a way that helps build a pipeline for wealth

generation,” she said. “In partnership with community organizations, ODOT wants to bring jobs to minority communities, but also create apprenticeship opportunities and mentorships, so jobs become careers for future economic growth.”

To help implement these goals, ODOT has hired Hamilton Funds as a consultant and is working with Gramor Construction “with specific focus and dedication” to expanding participation of minority contractors and women.

ODOT’s overall plan is not just construction, Channell said.

“So we’re not just building a project, but developing a pipeline for the future and requirements for a workforce we want to see that requires a high level utilization of minorities and women to build the project,” she said.

Channell said ODOT also has established a community oversight committee that will have a direct role in helping shape requirements for contractor.

“The possibility is on the table for highway covers,” Channell said. “The original design assumed more open space, but we heard from the community and some of our partners that we need a different community vision, so we hired an independent contractor, but this will be a community effort.”

Interstate 5 was built in the 1960s and has seen no improvements since then. Channell said ODOT now sees the project as a “generational opportunity” by looking 50 years into the future as far as impacts on the community, which will play an increased role now in the design.

“We at ODOT obviously contribute a lot, but we cannot do it alone and we are excited about community partners,” she said.

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## Street Team

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consultation, and construction: we're ready. For community members living on the streets, this program could not come soon enough. People caught in the trap of a criminal justice system that ensnares them for simply trying to survive demand change, neighbors and family members demand change, and the first responders who need to be focused on high-level calls for service demand change. This first step toward change is here.”

According to Fire Chief Sara Boone, who is the first Black woman to lead the department, the fire service has had to be nimble over the years to respond to the ever-changing needs of the community.

“Portland Fire & Rescue is proud to help launch Portland Street Response and we're thankful for the hard work put in by our staff on this vanguard program,” she said. “We're excited to learn more from this pilot period and see how this much needed service can serve the whole city. This latest chapter of the first response story is historic, and we thank all of our partners who joined together to make this moment happen.”

The Street Response Team initially will be available in Lents, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. After six months, a second team will be added to cover the same area and to expand services to nights and weekend. By 2022, the program will ramp up to include more teams and coverage to locations across the city.