

Multnomah County District 2

Chair Senator Rob Wagner, and members of the Transportation Committee,

For the record, my name is Shannon Singleton and I am the Multnomah County District 2 Commissioner. I am writing today to express my support for funding the Rose Quarter Improvement Project (RQIP).

I was first introduced to the project through my role as Governor Brown's Director of Equity and Racial Justice. I spent a lot of time in that role facilitating a compromise between community members, PPS, ODOT, and contractors to get the project design that we have today. This work was critical to unsticking the project and gaining the support of our federal delegation. I also continued to work on this project when I was employed at Espousal Strategies. In this role, I supported ODOT and the City of Portland to keep community at the center, to operationalize their espoused goal of restorative justice, to follow through on their commitments to the historic Albina community. From the beginning, the State and ODOT made a promise to the Black community to finish this project. This project is about safety on the I-5 corridor, but it is also about repairing harm. The creation of I-5 displaced residents of the historic Albina neighborhood, a largely African-American neighborhood, and decimated the generational wealth being built through the use of eminent domain. This has caused generational trauma that is still felt to this day.

We know this project is about more than just concrete; and not knowing whether our federal partners will keep their word, we need to keep ours. This project was designed with the community, and it offers a rare opportunity to address and start to repair the harm that was caused. We need to lean in and fund this project. We cannot continue to disinvest in projects for Black and Brown communities when things get hard. We know that this project can be a great economic driver, providing living-wage jobs and the pathway to generational wealth. Please keep your word and follow through to fund the Rose Quarter Improvement Project.

Thank you for your time and service to the state of Oregon.

Respectfully,

Shannon Singleton