



# **ALBERTA STREETSCAPE PLAN**

**December 1999  
City of Portland  
Office of Transportation  
Engineering and Development**

**Adopted February 2000**

# Alberta Streetscape Project

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Alberta Street Fair for hosting the May, 1999 Open House  
Our Dream Gallery for hosting the June, 1999 Open House

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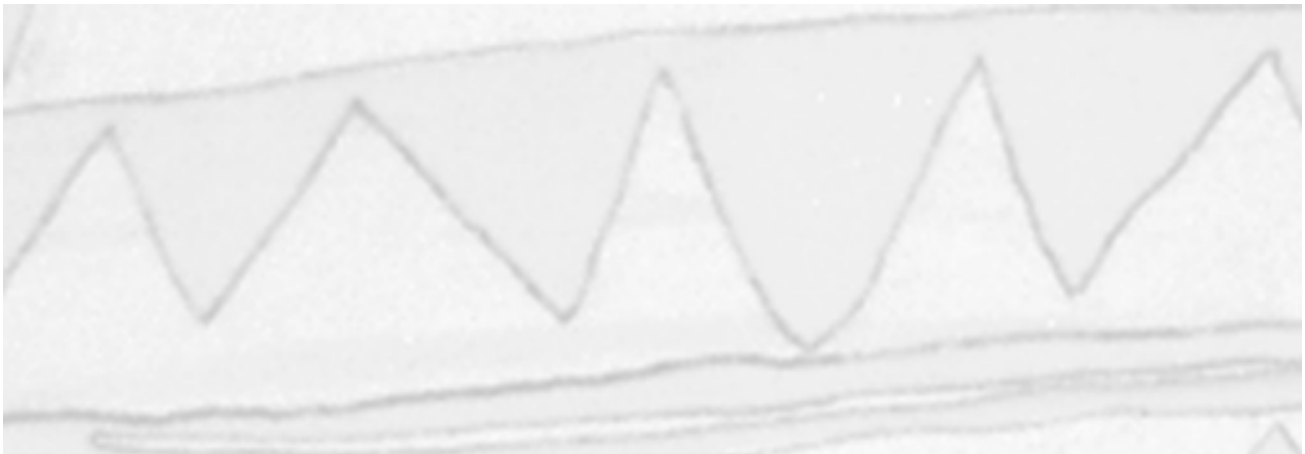
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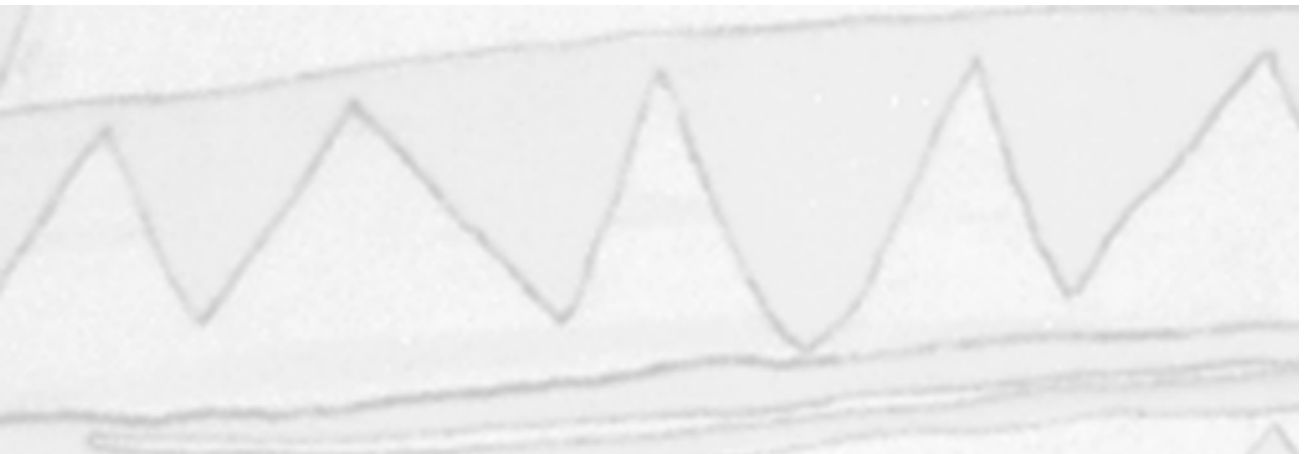
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## **PLAN PURPOSE**

The Alberta Streetscape Project was initiated by community members to plan and build transportation improvements that would improve the safety and visual quality of the street to support commercial and residential revitalization on and near Alberta Street.

The project area, N.E. Alberta Street from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to 33rd Avenue, was once a thriving business district served by a streetcar line. After a period of decline, which reached its height in the late 1980s, people began to come back to the street, opening new businesses and fixing up the older homes.

The existing street, with one lane of travel in each direction, on-street parking, and sidewalks on both sides, is ideally suited to support small- and medium-sized businesses in a neighborhood business district. The challenge for this project was overcoming the problems that developed when the street was in decline: speeding cars, unsafe pedestrian crossing conditions, vehicles parked on the sidewalk, the lack of curb ramps and street trees, and poor visual quality of the street and sidewalk.

The community wanted a plan that would result in physical changes on the street. This plan document describes the recommended improvements to the existing street and sidewalk on Alberta Street, including the type and location of safe pedestrian crossings, improvements to slow traffic, types and locations of new street trees, ways to improve transit access, and options to make the street look better through street furniture and art.

## PLAN SUMMARY

The Alberta Streetscape Plan contains recommendations for improvements to NE Alberta Street from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to 33rd Avenue. The recommendations, which respond to the community's priorities for Alberta Street, are summarized below.

**New curb extensions** will be placed at selected intersections, including most transit stops. The curb extensions will help slow traffic, improve pedestrian crossing safety, protect parked cars, enhance transit stops and provide additional space for street furniture.

**Ornamental lighting** will be placed at all major intersections and transit stops. They will provide additional lighting for pedestrians, give the street a safe appearance, and help create identity for the street.

**Street trees** will be placed at regular intervals along the block faces to add greenery and shade in the summer, help create a consistent image for Alberta, and visually narrow the street to slow traffic.

**New street furniture** will include transit shelters and bike racks. The plan also includes guidelines for the placement and size of other types of street furniture, such as benches, trash cans, planters and benches, to allow for individual expression on the street.



# HISTORY OF THE STREET

## Alberta's Early Days

Alberta Street originally was part of the town of Albina, which was laid out in 1872 by Edwin Russell and William W. Page. Alberta Street's name may have been suggested by Page's wife, who was from Canada, as a tribute to England's Princess Alberta or the Canadian province named after her. Alberta Street became part of Portland in 1891 when Albina was consolidated into the city.

The area was first settled by working class German and Irish immigrants who came to fill the jobs provided by the Albina rail yards in the mid-1880s. Soon after, Russian, Scandinavian, Jewish and Polish populations established communities in the area as well. Evidence of these early residents is visible in the churches and social clubs, built by these groups, which are still standing today.

## The Streetcar Years

Alberta Street's history has long been influenced by transportation patterns. During the 1890s, the construction of several trolley lines generated rapid development of streets and homes in north and northeast Portland, including the area around Alberta Street. The line on Union Avenue provided access to the west end of Alberta Street, with trolleys running every ten minutes.



*Several neighborhood landmark buildings, including the Alameda Theater at the center of this 1927 photograph, provide a visual reminder of Alberta Street's history. The theater, which today houses the Victory Outreach Church, stands at the corner of 30th where the Alberta Streetcar turned north to Ainsworth Street.*

The Alberta streetcar line, which opened in 1903, ran across the Steel Bridge from downtown, up Union Avenue (now Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard) then east on Alberta to 23rd. By 1909, the line was extended to 30th, where it turned north to Ainsworth.



Advertisements in a 1924 edition of *The Oregon Journal* illustrate the breadth of services and merchandise available on Alberta Street in the 1920s.



St. Andrew Catholic Church has been a community landmark on Alberta Street since the current building was dedicated in 1929.

Oregon Historical Society Neg. #000701



In 1927, Union Avenue (now Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard) was still a major north-south thoroughfare which brought customers to Alberta Street businesses.

Once the streetcar was running, it was only a few years until a thriving business district developed on Alberta Street. Many of the commercial buildings from this era, which often included apartments behind or above the store for the business owners and their families, remain on the street today.

By the mid 1920s, the Alberta District was described as “practically a city within itself” in an article from a 1924 Sunday issue of the *The Oregon Journal*. Alberta was characterized as “a section of beautiful modern homes surrounded with attractive lawns and gardens and a business center containing well-stocked stores and shops and offices ....” Virtually all community needs could be met on Alberta Street, since the district had a lively mix of general and specialty stores, restaurants, garages, a theater, a library, an active commercial club, fraternal organizations and a local newspaper, *The Alberta Commercial Vision*.

Community anchors included the Victoria Theater, the Highland Baptist Church and St. Andrew Catholic Church. The St. Andrew parish, established in 1907, completed their first church in 1908. After fire destroyed the church in 1920, they built the present-day church in 1928. The current St. Andrew church, dedicated in 1929, is a National Historic Landmark.

### Transportation Changes and Community Decline

The community on Alberta thrived until the 1940s. Until then, Union Avenue was the primary route to Vancouver, carrying traffic which brought people to the businesses on Union and Alberta. When Interstate Avenue became the designated route to Vancouver in the 1940s, it took away much of the traffic that provided customers to area businesses. In 1948, the streetcar line was replaced by buses. New retail practices that included supermarkets and other volume stores also took their toll on local shops. The completion of Interstate 5 in the 1960s took most of the through north-south traffic from the local streets, which further eroded the customer base for both Union and Alberta Streets. As businesses moved or closed, neighborhood residents could no longer shop locally for all of their needs.

The neighborhood began changing in other ways during the 1940s. The Vanport flood in 1948 displaced many African-Americans, many of whom moved to neighborhoods around Alberta Street. By the mid-1950s, the neighborhood was known as a place where African-Americans and working class people could find affordable, single-family homes. Urban renewal projects, such as the construction of the

Memorial Coliseum and Emanuel Hospital, razed many homes to make way for new construction. Families displaced by these projects often sought homes in the Albina community and the area around Alberta Street. Some of these new residents eventually established businesses on Alberta Street, such as Coast Janitorial and R. D. Sevier and Son.

The racial unrest of the 1960s took its toll on the street when, in July of 1967, two days of violence shook the Albina community. Many businesses on Alberta were vandalized, looted or burned. Some, such as the Alberta Furniture Store, never reopened. The street, and the surrounding neighborhood, entered a downward spiral of decline.

By the 1980s, the neighborhood's derelict houses, neglected yards, abandoned cars, and turned-over shopping carts gave Alberta a bad name. Businesses could not succeed in a deteriorating neighborhood, and storefronts were boarded up. The Rexall Pharmacy and soda fountain, a neighborhood landmark for 66 years, closed in 1981. With no place to shop or eat on Alberta, neighborhood residents went elsewhere, leaving the street without people or activity.

### **New Signs of Life**

In 1989, residents were ready to take back their neighborhood and formed the North/Northeast Economic Development Task Force to provide input into the Albina Community Plan.

By the early 1990s, new signs of life were starting to take hold on the street which local business and property owner Roslyn Hill called "an asphalt war zone." More than a dozen new shops, cafes and non-profit agencies opened, including the Rexall Rose Cafe, the Community Cycling Center and Roslyn's Garden Coffee House. The new Walnut Park Community Policing Center (on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard at Killingsworth Street) added a more visible police presence in the area.

In 1992, Sabin Community Development Corporation (Sabin CDC) was formed to preserve and create affordable housing in the community around Alberta Street. They quickly expanded their role to support a broader goal of community revitalization with an emphasis on Alberta Street as the backbone of the neighborhood. Early efforts, such as organizing monthly litter pick ups and helping property owners fix up their buildings, quickly improved the appearance of the street and supported business development.



*Closed businesses with boarded-up storefronts gave Alberta Street a bleak image in the 1980s.*



*Entrepreneur Roslyn Hill's Garden Coffee House brought new life and color to the street when it opened in 1994.*



*Volunteers, organized by Sabin CDC, pick up litter on the last Saturday of each month to keep the street clean.*



*The Alberta Street Fair, started by Sabin CDC in 1998, has promoted a positive image of Alberta Street throughout the region.*

### **Alberta Street Today**

Long-time residents of the neighborhood recall earlier times when Alberta was a “home town” street: friendly, clean, lots of places to go and people stopping to talk. Today, new and long-time residents of the neighborhood are working together to regain some of the street’s earlier qualities.

Alberta is now characterized by a grassroots, can-do attitude which can be seen in the banners, trash cans, litter pick-up and other projects initiated and carried out by residents, business and property owners, and nonprofit organizations working together. The Alberta Street Fair, started by Sabin CDC in 1998, brought many of the merchants, property owners and residents together as neighbors. This annual event also has generated publicity for the street and businesses which promotes a positive image of the street today.

### **New Businesses Thrive**

New businesses are appearing on the street each month, and many are first-time business ventures for the owners. A mix of businesses, including retail, restaurants, services, commercial offices, and light



*The Alberta Art Walk attracts people from all parts of the city to walk, shop and eat on Alberta Street.*

industrial, co-exist on the street. Alberta is developing a reputation for good food and art, fueled in part by the Last Thursday Art Walk. Started in the spring of 1997, the art walk features art in galleries, studios, restaurants and cafes once a month. It generates awareness of the businesses on the street, and more importantly, brings people out to walk and talk on the street.

In the best tradition of Alberta Street’s beginnings, the diversity of cultures continues with the recent influx of Asian and Latino businesses. Buildings and storefronts are being rehabilitated and painted. Gardens and planters add color to the urban landscape.



*Latino stores and restaurants contribute to Alberta Street’s tradition of diversity.*

While Alberta Street is clearly on the upswing, many residents and business owners want to make sure the success of the commercial district does not force out the small businesses which have been an integral part of the street’s revival. They see the area’s history and multicultural flavor as an asset to be preserved and hope to promote an eclectic, neighborhood-serving mix of businesses on Alberta Street.

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The seeds for the Alberta Streetscape Project were sown in 1991 when local entrepreneur Sam Brooks invited a class of architecture students from the University of Oregon to analyze the street and generate proposals for improving Alberta Street. The students' ideas, presented at a community open house, were met by a variety of responses from enthusiasm to skepticism. While many people wanted to see changes on the street, the momentum was not yet strong enough to move the project forward.



*In 1991, architecture students from the University of Oregon envisioned redevelopment opportunities, streetscape improvements and a revival of the streetcar for Alberta Street.*

A few years later, Sabin CDC began to take a look at how they could improve the neighborhood in which they were providing affordable housing. Their Target Area Plan for Alberta street was the genesis for the streetscape project.

In 1995, Sabin CDC received a five-year target area designation (TAD) and funding from Portland's Bureau of Housing and Community Development to address a variety of issues in an area that includes parts of the King, Sabin, Vernon and Concordia neighborhoods. The TAD program is based on the premise that revitalization is most effective when it is targeted, community-directed, and multi-faceted.

With a group of committed community members, Sabin CDC worked in five program areas during the first year: neighborhood livability and aesthetics, public safety (including traffic calming and crime), youth projects, affordable housing and commercial revitalization.



*Sabin CDC's first workshop drew more than 100 people to talk about the future of Alberta Street.*

After the first year, Sabin CDC and the community decided that the project would be more successful if they focused on commercial revitalization; therefore, they decided to limit their work plan to the commercial district on NE Alberta Street. In June of 1996, Sabin CDC held a meeting where more than 100 people gathered to talk about what they wanted to see happen on the street. Based on the input from that meeting, Sabin decided to concentrate their work on four areas: street beautification, commercial revitalization, streetscape improvements, and youth involvement. They formed committees of residents, business owners and property owners to start work and make immediate improvements that would be visible to all. The street beautification group planted flowers and street trees, and organized clean-up days on the street, while the commercial revitalization committee published a resource directory.



*Design workshop participants mapped out their ideas for new development and streetscape improvements in the spring of 1997.*

The streetscape committee implemented projects to begin long-term planning for the street. With volunteer help from a local design firm, Murase Associates, they held two design workshops in the winter and spring of 1997 at which participants worked on a map and video of the street. The community volunteers also obtained photos of the street (both current and historical) for the first workshop.

At this point, the streetscape committee decided that they needed a more detailed plan to guide improvements on the street. In 1997, several committee members wrote a grant application for funding from the state's Transportation and Growth Management program. The grant required the city to manage the project, so the committee teamed up with Portland's Office of Transportation to develop a streetscape plan for NE Alberta Street between NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and NE 33rd Avenue.

Since part of Alberta Street is within the Oregon Convention Center Urban Renewal Area, city staff members were able to augment the grant with funding from the Portland Development Commission. The Portland Office of Transportation also added resources to the project to ensure an inclusive, community-based process was used to develop the plan.

Many of the original streetscape committee members continued to participate in the streetscape planning as part of the Alberta Streetscape Project Advisory Committee. Their active involvement in the project has provided a strong base for community input throughout the planning process.

# OVERVIEW OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

In 1998, the city's project team and community representatives selected a consultant team and started working on the streetscape plan for Alberta Street from N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to N.E. 33rd Avenue.

The project team worked with the four neighborhood associations adjacent to Alberta, local businesses, nonprofit agencies and key stakeholders to identify organizations and individuals who should be included on the project's advisory committee. The advisory committee also included many of the members from the original streetscape committee.

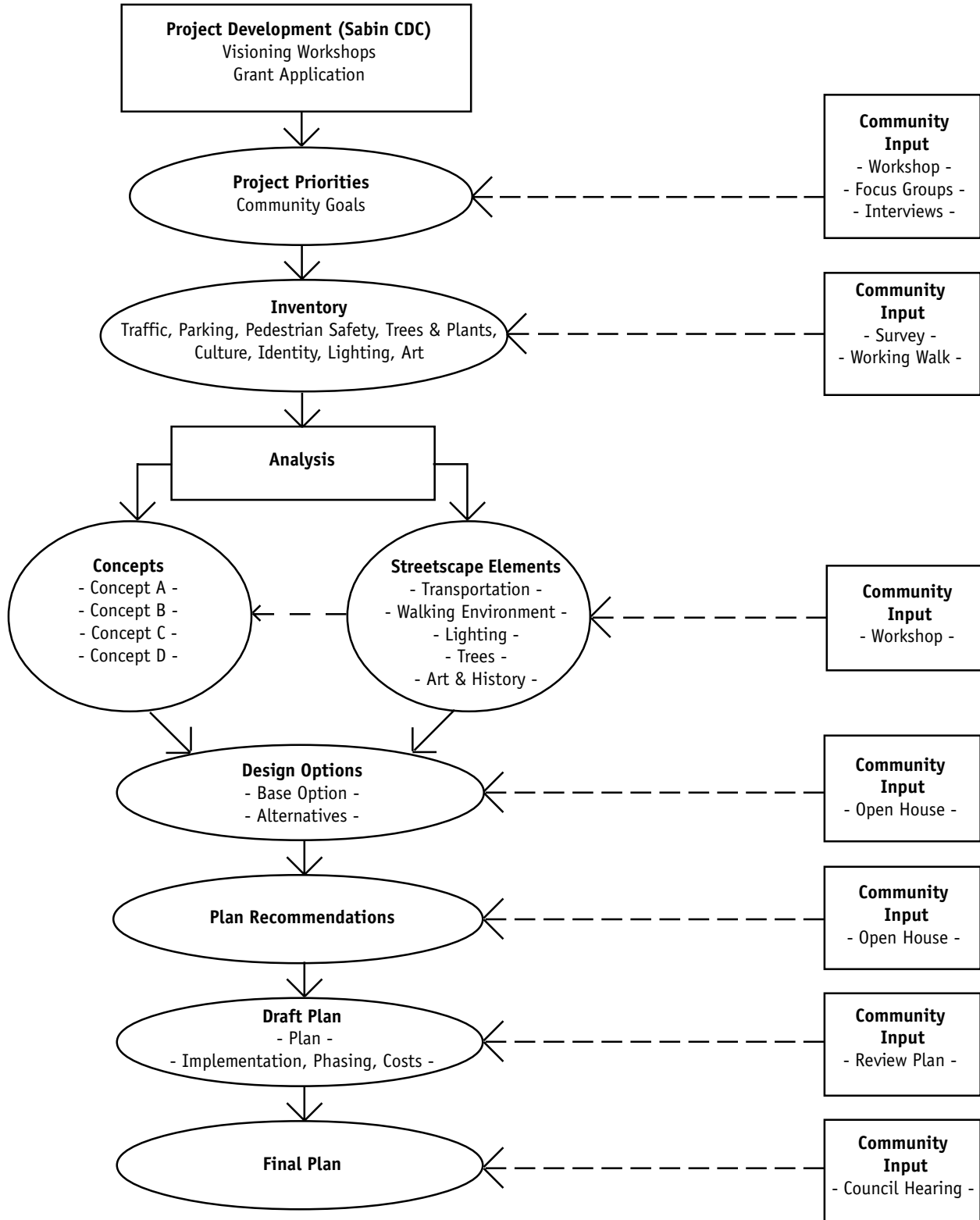
The plan was developed over approximately one year, drawing on the previous work initiated by Sabin CDC. The process, illustrated in the diagram on the next page, first established community goals for the project. The project team collected and analyzed information about the street, then used that information and the community priorities to develop a series of concepts, or ways to approach the design for the street. The team also assembled a range of streetscape elements that could be used to carry out the concepts.

With input from the community and the project's advisory committee on the concepts and the preferred streetscape elements, the project team developed a base option and alternative options for the street that were presented to the community and advisory committee for review and input. Based on this input, the team prepared the plan recommendations that form the basis of this draft plan document.

A detailed description of the community outreach tools used during the planning process is located in the next section.

In addition to community involvement, the project team collaborated with partners from several agencies and groups, including Sabin CDC, a group of business owners that became the Alberta Business Association in the spring of 1999, the Portland Development Commission and the Bureau of Housing and Community Development.

## Alberta Streetscape Planning Process





# PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & OUTREACH

The Alberta Streetscape Project encompasses an area of Portland which is home to a diverse community of long-time and new residents and business owners. People who work, live, shop and visit Alberta Street hold strong, and often divergent, views about the future of the street.

To ensure that the streetscape project met the needs of the Alberta Street community, the public involvement component of the project was carefully crafted. The process of developing the streetscape plan was designed to be visible, accessible and inclusive. To do this, the outreach activities were created to respect all aspects of the diversity in this neighborhood and respond to the various ways constituents were comfortable participating in the process.

## Objectives

The outreach program had three objectives:

- *Inform:* Create awareness of the project and provide information in ways that help people understand the project and keep it alive in their minds.
- *Engage:* Reach out to people and find a way for them to participate on their own terms. Access the range of diversity represented on the street and in the neighborhood.
- *Involve:* Provide opportunities for people to be part of the project and give meaningful input in ways that work for them.

## Activities

The project team employed a variety of activities and strategies during the life of the project to meet the outreach objectives. More importantly, the activities accommodated the variety of preferences for participating in a project, from public events to informal one-on-one meetings. The team also offered outreach activities for those who do not traditionally participate in public meetings.

## Project Advisory Committee

The project advisory committee was formed in August, 1998 and met monthly from September, 1998 through the summer of 1999. The committee's membership was designed to represent the various interests and groups involved with the street, and to reflect the diversity of the people on the street.



*Outreach activities, such as this June, 1999 open house, provided opportunities for community members to participate in the planning process.*

The committee provided an important link back to groups and individuals along the street and in the neighborhood. Furthermore, the committee provided direction and input to make decisions at each step of the process.



*Participants in the second public workshop evaluated design options for Alberta Street.*

### **Public Workshops and Open Houses**

Two public workshops and three open houses were held to elicit community input into the plan.

- September, 1998 - Project Kick-Off  
Informed the community about the plan, facilitated a dialogue about values and key issues for the street, and established community goals and objectives for the project.
- February, 1999 - Public Workshop  
Presented research and analysis, and obtained input on the preferred type and location of improvements.
- April/May, 1999 - Open Houses  
Heard comments on the base option and alternatives.
- June, 1999 - Open House  
Presented the plan recommendations and provided an opportunity for community comment.



*Project Advisory Committee and community members walked the length of Alberta Street with the project team to analyze the conditions and brainstorm design solutions.*

### **Working Walk - December, 1998**

The project team, advisory committee and community members spent a Saturday morning walking the street to analyze existing conditions and discuss possible approaches for design solutions.

### **Business Survey - January 1999**

The project team developed and distributed a survey to all of the businesses along Alberta Street to learn more about how the street is used by business owners and their customers. Information on destinations, traffic and speeding cars, safety and on-street parking was provided by the respondents. Eighty-nine surveys were distributed (46 in person and 43 by mail) and 37 were returned for a 41% response rate.

### **Interviews - January, 1999**

The project team identified and interviewed several long-time and older residents of the community to learn about the history of the street, significant places on the street, destinations in the neighborhood, places where problems exist and what should be done to improve the street.

### **Youth Focus Group - January 1999**

A small group of 4th and 5th students from Vernon Elementary School worked with the project team to identify problems on the street, discuss where they go and what they do on Alberta Street, and imagine what could be done to improve the street for youth.



*Students at Vernon Elementary School map out improvements to Alberta Street at a work session with the project team in January, 1999.*

### **Project Mailings - September, 1998 through June, 1999**

Five mailings were each sent to approximately 9,000 households and businesses on and near Alberta Street to announce public meetings and provide updates on the project's progress.

### **Road Show - April through June, 1999**

Project staff visited 13 community-based organizations, business groups and neighborhood associations to present the plan alternatives and listen to comments about the choices.

### **Web Site**

Project information was posted on a web site created by community volunteers and maintained by the city. Information was updated at each phase of the project. The website address is [www.trans.ci.portland.or.us/Engineering\\_and\\_Development/Pedestrian\\_Program/Alberta.htm](http://www.trans.ci.portland.or.us/Engineering_and_Development/Pedestrian_Program/Alberta.htm)

### **Community News**

Information on the project was provided to the editors of community newspapers and neighborhood newsletters to provide additional updates on the project between mailings.

# PROJECT GOALS AND COMMUNITY PRIORITIES



*Workshop participants discussed goals and priorities for Alberta Street in September, 1998.*

The project was initiated to develop an urban transportation and streetscape improvement plan for Alberta Street. The project team asked the community to identify their priorities for the street and for the project. Input from workshops, surveys, conversations with individual residents and business owners, and the project's advisory committee formed the priorities for the project.

## **Alberta Project Priorities**

- Create a better walking environment and safer pedestrian crossings along Alberta.
- Slow traffic along the street and minimize traffic impacts on surrounding neighborhood streets.
- Provide balance between and access for all transportation modes.
- Ensure adequate on-street parking is available.
- Add more trees, plants and community gathering areas along the street.
- Make the street a safe, clean and well-lit place that supports commercial and community interests, especially youth, families and small businesses.
- Reflect and enhance the community's identity and diverse cultural heritage.
- Incorporate art and color into streetscape elements.
- Involve the community in a meaningful way to develop a plan that is firmly grounded in the community which surrounds it and that reflects the diversity of people, uses and transportation needs.

These priorities guided the decisions at each phase of the project to arrive at the recommendations in this plan.

# RESEARCH AND DECISION-MAKING

## Existing Conditions

### Street Classifications

The Transportation Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan classifies Alberta Street as follows:

Traffic: Neighborhood Collector  
Transit: Minor Transit Street (I-5 to 30th)  
Pedestrian: City Walkway  
Bicycle: Local Service Bikeway  
Truck: Local Service Street  
Emergency: Minor Emergency Response Route

### Roadway Configuration

Alberta Street has one traffic lane in each direction with on-street parking in most locations and no designated bicycle lanes. Sidewalks are provided along both sides of Alberta Street in the study area. The effective roadway width (curb-to-curb) is 40 feet from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to 14th Place and 36 feet from 14th Place to 33rd Avenue.

### Sidewalks

Alberta Street has continuous sidewalk adjacent to the street. The sidewalk is 10 feet wide between NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and NE 14th Place, and 12 feet wide between NE 14th Place and NE 33rd Avenue. The majority of the sidewalk is 80-90 years old and much of it needs repair. Some portions of the sidewalk have been rebuilt as part of new construction or renovation projects on adjacent property.

### Traffic Volume and Speed

Alberta Street carries approximately 10,500 vehicles per day at the west end near 8th Avenue and 5,800 vehicles per day at the east end near 28th Avenue. The traffic volumes on Alberta Street are directional with peak direction of traffic westbound in the morning and eastbound in the evening. Alberta's traffic volumes are typical for a neighborhood collector in Portland, which average between 2,000 and 10,000 vehicles per day. It is not uncommon for neighborhood collectors to carry up to 20,000 vehicles per day. By comparison to NE Alberta, SE Division near 38th carries approximately 14,000 vehicles per day, SE Belmont near 34th carries approximately 13,000 vehicles per day, and NW 23rd near Lovejoy carries approximately 9,500 vehicles per day.



*Alberta Street has one traffic lane in each direction, continuous sidewalks on both sides of the street, on-street parking in most locations, and transit service on the majority of the street.*

### Traffic Signals and School Crossings

Traffic signals are located at NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, NE 7th Avenue, NE 15th Avenue and NE 33rd Avenue. Marked school crossings are located at 6th Avenue and 21st Avenue. The crossing at 6th also has two median islands to provide a pedestrian crossing refuge.

### Streets Crossing Alberta

Alberta is crossed by several roadways which are classified as follows:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard: Major City Traffic Street, Major City Transit Street, City Bikeway, City Walkway and Major Truck Street;
- 15th Avenue: Neighborhood Collector, Minor Transit Street, City Bikeway and City Walkway;
- 27th Avenue: Minor Transit Street, City Walkway;
- 29th Avenue: City Bikeway;
- 30th Avenue (north of Alberta): Minor Transit Street, City Walkway;
- 33rd Avenue: District Collector, Major City Transit Street, City Walkway.



*The community placed a high priority on improving pedestrian crossings for Alberta Street.*

### Pedestrian Crossing Gap Analysis

The city's project team conducted a study to analyze the number of available gaps in traffic for pedestrians to safely cross the street. The study analyzed gaps at 11th, 18th, and 28th Avenues during the peak traffic hour of 4:30 - 5:30 pm. At 11th, 61 gaps occurred in an hour, while at 18th, 70 gaps occurred in an hour. At these locations, adequate gaps were available for pedestrians to cross on average at least once every minute. At 28th, only 42 adequate gaps occurred in an hour (every 90 seconds on average) which is less than desirable for adequate pedestrian crossing opportunities.

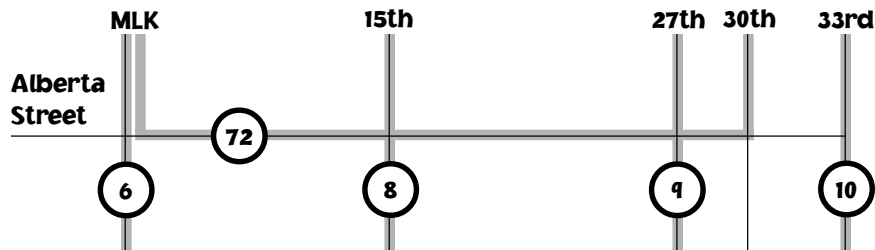
Another study was done at 22nd, one block from the school crossing at 21st, from 2:30 - 3:30 pm, a time when school children are generally present. This analysis found more than one gap per minute was available for crossing, and was based on a slower walking speed to represent school-aged pedestrians. More information on the pedestrian crossing gap analysis is provided in the Technical Appendix.

### Transit

Alberta has one Tri-Met bus route, line #72, which runs from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to 30th. The line is served by low floor buses which must pull up next to the curb to deploy the ramp for accessible boardings and deboardings. Four transit lines cross Alberta:

- #6 on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard,
- #8 on 15th Avenue,
- #9 on 27th Avenue,
- #10 on 33rd Avenue.

The transit lines serving Alberta Street are shown below.



### Street Trees

Street trees on Alberta have been planted by adjacent property owners and through tree plantings by Friends of Trees in 1995 and 1996. Existing trees are not consistent in species, age or health. Because planting trees in the past was up to the property or business owners, there is no consistent canopy of trees along the street.

The sidewalk width includes a three- to four-foot furnishing zone which provides adequate room for street trees.

### Lighting

Existing lighting on Alberta Street is cobra head style, designed to provide adequate light for drivers. Some places on the sidewalk remain dark and only a few buildings provide storefront lighting or ambient light from display windows. The areas where the alleys cross Alberta also are dark and need additional lighting.

### Land Use and Zoning

Existing land use on Alberta Street is a mix of commercial, light industrial, storefront retail and residential, both single-family and multi-family. The zoning for the street is:

- General Commercial (CG) from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to 14th Avenue
- Storefront Commercial (CS) from 14th Avenue to 31st Avenue
- Medium Density Multi-Dwelling (R-1) from 31st to 33rd

In addition, several other zoning types exist in small areas on the street, including:

- Central Employment (EX) from 20th to 22nd;
- Medium-Density Multi-Dwelling (R-1) from 24th to 25th; and
- Urban Commercial (CS) at the southwest corner of 33rd.

A zoning map is located in the technical appendix.



*Some of the existing street trees on Alberta are in good condition (above) while others are not (below).*



## **Related Planning Efforts and Projects**

### **Albina Community Plan (1993)**

The Albina Community Plan includes NE Alberta Street in its recommendations for transportation improvements. Specifically, the plan recommends Alberta as a potential location for art that symbolizes the diversity of the Albina district, and for streetscape improvements, such as benches, trash receptacles, bus shelters, ornamental street lights, sidewalk improvements and public art.

The Albina Community Plan is being updated and the revised plan is expected to be presented to the City Council in January, 2000. The revised version is expected to recommend implementation of the Alberta Streetscape Plan.

### **Concordia Neighborhood Plan (1993)**

The Concordia Neighborhood Plan identifies Alberta Street as a revitalization focus area. (Note: The Concordia Neighborhood includes NE Alberta Street east of 22nd Avenue.)

### **King Neighborhood Plan (1993)**

The King Neighborhood Plan recommends new ornamental lighting on Alberta Street. (Note: The King Neighborhood includes NE Alberta Street from NE MLK Jr. Boulevard to NE 15th Avenue.)

### **Alberta Corridor Target Area Work Plans, Sabin CDC (1995-2000)**

The target area work plans include activities to plan, promote and build streetscape improvements on NE Alberta Street from MLK Jr. Boulevard to 33rd Avenue. The work plans also direct Sabin CDC to facilitate community involvement in streetscape planning.

### **Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard Commercial Development Strategy (1998)**

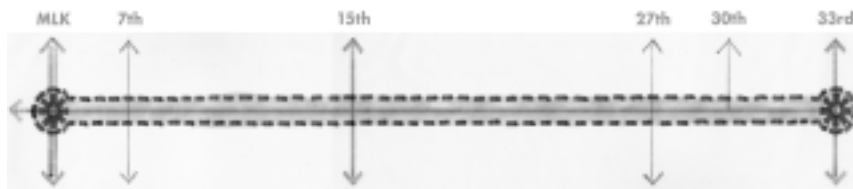
The MLK Jr. Boulevard Commercial Development Strategy calls for an enhanced streetscape and improved pedestrian environment on NE Alberta Street from MLK Jr. Boulevard to 33rd Avenue, including street furniture and landscaping. It also recommends a neighborhood gateway at 33rd Avenue.



## Conceptual Approaches

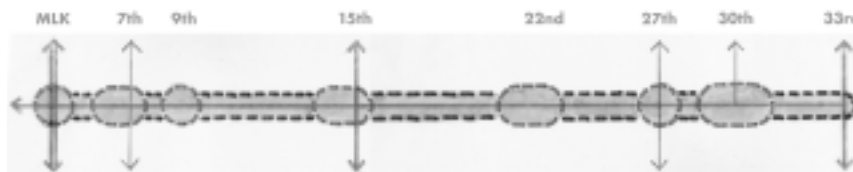
The project team and project advisory committee considered several conceptual approaches to organizing improvements on the street. These were refined and presented to the participants of the February, 1999 workshop for comment. The conceptual approaches are shown below.

After much discussion by the Policy Advisory Committee and the workshop participants, the consensus was a combination of the concepts. People liked the idea of a consistent set of improvements to provide identity and the unique treatment of the residential area on the east end of the street. But, they also felt that there may be some opportunities to focus improvements to highlight special areas.



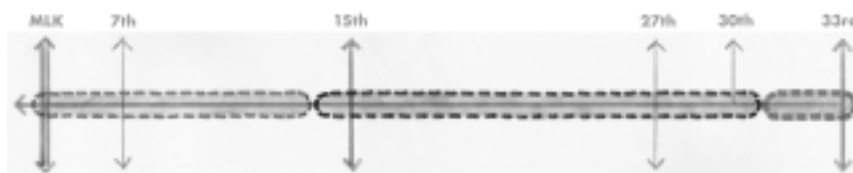
### Concept A: Consistent Identity

A consistent set of improvements placed in a regular pattern provides identity and continuity for the street



### Concept B: Special Areas

Focused improvements highlight special areas, such as transit transfer points, pedestrian destinations and other high-use areas.



### Concept C: Unique Districts

The street is treated as three unique districts: MLK to 14th; 13th to 31st; and 31st to 33rd.



### Concept D: Combination of A and C

A consistent set of improvements placed in a regular pattern provides identity and continuity for the street, while the residential district from 31st to 33rd is treated as a unique area.

## Alternatives for Streetscape Elements

### Transportation

The project team explored and analyzed options for slowing traffic speeds and improving pedestrian crossings on the street.

### Options and Analysis for Slowing Traffic Speeds

- Visually Narrow the Street Width. Studies have shown that drivers tend to travel more slowly on narrow streets. Treatments such as curb extensions, street trees, ornamental lighting and banner poles can make the street appear narrower. This could help slow traffic on Alberta Street.

- Traffic Signals. Closely spaced traffic signals can control vehicle speeds in the appropriate setting. On Alberta, this would be possible if traffic signals were spaced at three- or four-block intervals, but could increase traffic on some of the side streets. Signals are quite expensive and would be out of context with the character of the street.



*While speed bumps are used on neighborhood streets to calm traffic, they are not used in commercial areas.*

- Speed Bumps. While speed bumps are a key component of traffic calming programs on neighborhood streets, they are not used in commercial areas, such as Alberta, due to impacts on transit, emergency vehicles, school buses and trucks.

- Define the Parking Zone. Providing and emphasizing the parking zone gives the impression of a narrow vehicle right-of-way. In areas where on-street parking is not heavily used, inserting a different paving material or striping the parking area may visually narrow the street when parked cars are not present. Striping wears off quickly and needs to be replaced often, while special paving materials often require more maintenance than asphalt. In addition, any type of raised or uneven surface can pose hazards to bicyclists.

- Curb Extensions. Curb extensions at the corners and at bus stops narrow the travel lane and also allow buses to stop in the travel lane, thereby slowing down the vehicles behind them. Appropriate consideration for turning vehicles must be made. Curb extensions are feasible on Alberta Street.

### Options and Analysis for Improving Pedestrian Crossings

- Curb Extensions. Curb extensions improve pedestrian crossings by shortening the crossing distance and putting the pedestrian further out into the intersection before they step off the curb, making it easier for pedestrians to see cars and for drivers to see pedestrians. Curb extensions have the potential to improve crossings on Alberta.

- **Change in Paving Materials.** A change in paving materials at pedestrian crossings can make the crossing more visible for on-coming vehicles. Different colors (such as red or gray) and textures (such as brick or cobble) have been used successfully in other locations. Different paving materials have the potential to be used on Alberta, although maintenance issues would need to be addressed first.
- **Median Islands.** Median islands can be used as refuge areas at unsignalized pedestrian crossings where adequate gaps in traffic flow are not available to allow pedestrians to completely cross a street. Median islands are most useful on five-lane roadways with traffic volumes over 15,000 vehicles per day. They are not necessary on Alberta Street where adequate vehicle gaps are available for pedestrian crossings. Also, median islands require removal of on-street parking which is not desirable on Alberta Street.
- **Overhead Pedestrian Signs.** Overhead pedestrian crossing signs can be used to improve the visibility of pedestrian crossings. Illuminated flashing signs can further enhance the crossing visibility. The signs can be programmed to flash 24 hours a day, during certain time periods, or when a pedestrian is present at the crossing. Overhead signs could be used at the most critical crossings on Alberta.
- **Pavement Light System.** This system consists of a series of yellow flashing lights embedded in the pavement at pedestrian crossings to enhance the visibility of the crossing. This treatment is being tested by the City of Portland for benefits and costs, and it is not yet available for widespread use. Many people felt this type of system on Alberta would not be compatible with the character of the street.

After evaluating the options, the Project Advisory Committee and project team felt that curb extensions were the best solution to achieve the goals of slowing traffic, improving pedestrian safety, and enhancing transit access. They also recommended limited use of the overhead pedestrian signs at school crossings and a change in paving materials to mark the entries of the street (at Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and 33rd Avenue).



*A change in paving materials at pedestrian crossings can make the crossing more visible.*



*Overhead pedestrian crossing signs can be used to improve the visibility of pedestrian crossings.*



*Median islands can provide refuge areas at pedestrian crossings, but also require removal of on-street parking to make room for the medians.*

### **Street Trees**

The majority of community members who participated in the process strongly supported adding more street trees on Alberta along the block faces to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment and provide consistency along the street. Most people felt the option to provide trees only near the corners did not add enough trees to the street. While some people wanted to see trees on the corners, this is not possible due to the requirements to provide appropriate visibility at corners for motorist, bicyclist and pedestrian safety. Trees must be placed at least 25' from street corners according to the city's Urban Forestry Plan.

Some community members raised concerns about the maintenance and leaf removal responsibilities for street trees that would be placed on the property owner. Many people felt that it was important to have a variety of tree species on the street as well.

In response, the project team evaluated many trees species suitable for street tree planting and developed a list of trees that would be appropriate for Alberta Street. Property owners will be able to use this list to select the trees they wish to have planted in front of their property. This allows the property owner to choose trees which have lower maintenance requirements (smaller leaves, less pruning needs), while providing for some diversity of tree types on the street. While the goal is a green canopy of trees on Alberta, if a property owner refuses to maintain street trees adjacent to their property, trees will not be planted there.

### **Street Lighting**

Lighting the street is a high priority for safety and commerce. While many people indicated an interest in adding pedestrian-scale, ornamental lighting on every block, the cost would eliminate funding for other improvements. Policy Advisory Committee members and participants in the February workshop evaluated several alternatives to place additional lighting on the street:

- A: at the street "entries" (MLK and 33rd);
- B: at the street "entries" and signalized intersections;
- C: at the street "entries," signalized intersections and transit stops;  
and
- D: no additional lighting on the street.

The consensus was option C because it would add the most light to the street and still leave money for other improvements. This will allow for the opportunity to fill in the remaining corners with new lighting should additional funds become available.

A number of street light and pole types were evaluated by the project team and presented to the Policy Advisory Committee, open house participants and community groups for comment. Informal voting was conducted to determine a preference for street light and pole types. The options presented are shown in the Technical Appendix.

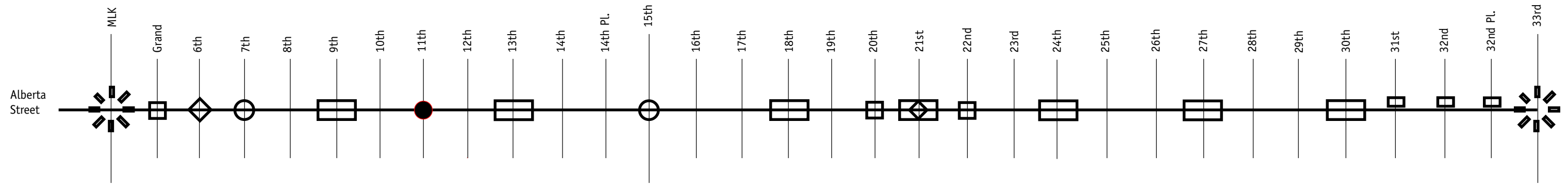
### **Street Furniture**

Options for street furniture, such as benches, trash cans, planters, banners and bike racks were presented to participants at the February, 1999 workshop, to the Policy Advisory Committee, and to community groups for comments. Street furniture was discussed in terms of general style and maintenance issues.

Generally, the community's preference was to add street furniture where possible to enhance the pedestrian and commercial environments. However, the comments collected by the project team indicate a strong desire to add to what is already on the street by continuing the community-based programs and individual efforts which have resulted in eclectic and diverse elements on Alberta.



# RECOMMENDED PLAN



## Guide to the Improvements

### Intersection Improvements at Transit Stops

These intersections will have transit stops on two corners and curb extensions on all four corners. Longer extensions will be built at the near side of these intersections where the transit stops will be located. New ornamental lighting, transit shelters or benches, trash cans and bike racks will be placed on these longer extensions. The two remaining corners will receive shorter curb extensions. All curb extensions will include new ramps for accessibility at the corners.

### Transit Stops

This intersection will have a transit stop with a bus zone on each of the near side corners. It also will receive ornamental lighting on all four corners.

### Residential Curb Extensions

The wider residential streets that enter Alberta at the east end (31st, 32nd and 32nd Place) will receive curb extensions to discourage traffic from entering the residential streets and to slow the cars that do turn onto the side streets. These extensions will include curb ramps for accessibility at the corners.

### Curb Extensions

These intersections will receive short curb extensions on all four corners to provide better pedestrian crossings and protect cars parked on the street. These curb extensions will receive ornamental lighting and curb ramps for accessibility on all four corners.

### Intersection Improvements at Transit Stops (at intersections with traffic signals)

Transit stops at signalized intersections (7th and 15th) will have ornamental lighting and trash cans. Curb extensions will not be placed at these intersections because they would block drivers from moving past cars waiting to turn left at the intersection.

### Entries to the Street

A different paving material will mark the eastern crossing at the intersection of MLK and the western crossing at the intersection of 33rd. Double-hung banners and ornamental lighting also will mark the street's entries at MLK and 33rd.

### Improvements between the Corners

Along each block face, street trees will be planted to add greenery and summer shade to the street. Space for bike racks, trash cans, planters and seating will be available between the street and the sidewalk. More banners will add color and identity to Alberta. The plan will provide guidelines for the size and placement of street furniture in this area.

### School Crossings

The school crossings will have curb extensions on all four corners of the intersections, painted crosswalks and overhead flashing beacons to alert drivers to the school crossing and improve safety for children crossing the street. The curb extensions will include curb ramps for accessibility at the corners.





# CURB EXTENSIONS

## Benefits of Curb Extensions

The recommended transportation improvements rely on curb extensions to provide a variety of functions on the street. The curb extensions will:

- increase pedestrian safety by reducing the pedestrian crossing distance;
- visually narrow the street to encourage motorists to drive at lower speeds;
- improve visibility at corners for pedestrians and drivers by preventing parking near the corner and putting the pedestrians further out in drivers' view;
- define the designated area for on-street parking and protect parked cars;
- meet requirements for access to low floor buses on Tri-Met Line #72
- provide additional space for amenities, such as shelters, seating, lighting and street furniture; and
- enhance transit stops by providing a more comfortable and pleasant place to wait.



*Curb extensions at transit stops would provide room for new lighting, benches or shelters, trash cans and street trees.*

## Curb Extensions at Transit Corners

### Curb Extension Locations

Most intersections with transit stops will have curb extensions on all four corners. Longer extensions (approximately 40') will be built at the near side of these intersections where the transit stops are located. The transit curb extensions will accommodate both front and back door bus boarding and deboarding for the low-floor buses. The longer curb extensions also will provide space for transit shelters or benches, street trees, and trash cans. The two remaining corners will receive shorter curb extensions (approximately 15').

The intersections of 9th, 13th, 18th, 21st , 24th and 27th will receive the improvements described above.

The intersection of 30th will receive three curb extensions: a longer transit extension on the southwest corner and short extensions on the northeast and southeast corners. The northwest corner will not receive a curb extension because the bus needs the space to make the right turn from southbound 30th to westbound Alberta.

**Curb Extension Amenities**

Transit shelters will be placed at the following stops: Eastbound (south side of Alberta) at 27th, 20th, and 9th; Westbound (north side of Alberta) at 27th, 20th, 18th, 13th, and 7th.

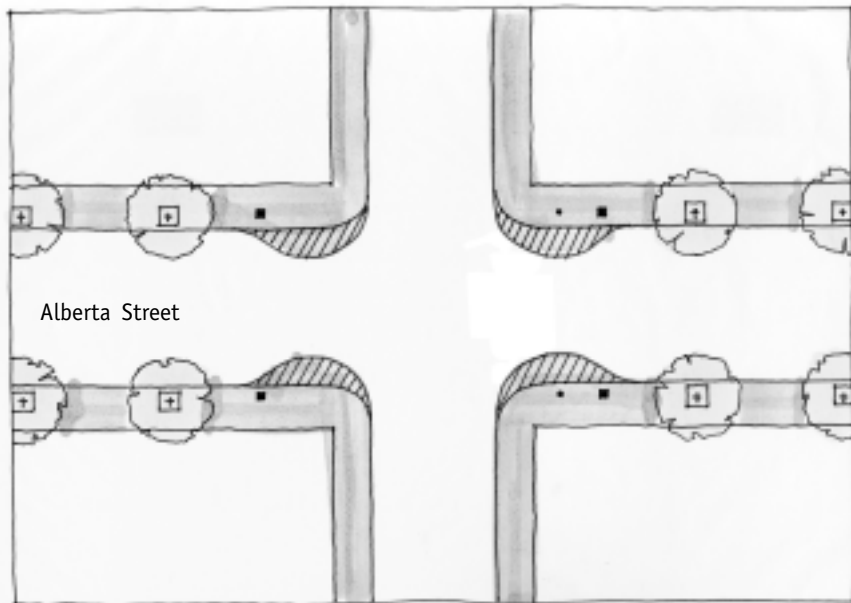
All curb extensions will include new ornamental lights and new ramps for accessibility at the corners. Curb extensions will be located on the Alberta side of the corner only; none of the above extensions will continue around the corner onto the side streets.

**Curb Extensions Near School Crossings**

**Grand, 20th, and 22nd Avenues**

The intersections of Grand, 20th and 22nd Avenues will receive short curb extensions on all four corners to slow traffic near the school crossings. As with the transit curb extensions described above, these extensions will include ornamental lighting and ramps for accessibility; none will extend around the corner onto the side streets. The intersection of 6th also will receive the short curb extensions, which are described in more detail in the School Crossings section on page 30.

*Short curb extensions at selected intersections will improve pedestrian crossings and provide protection for parked cars.*



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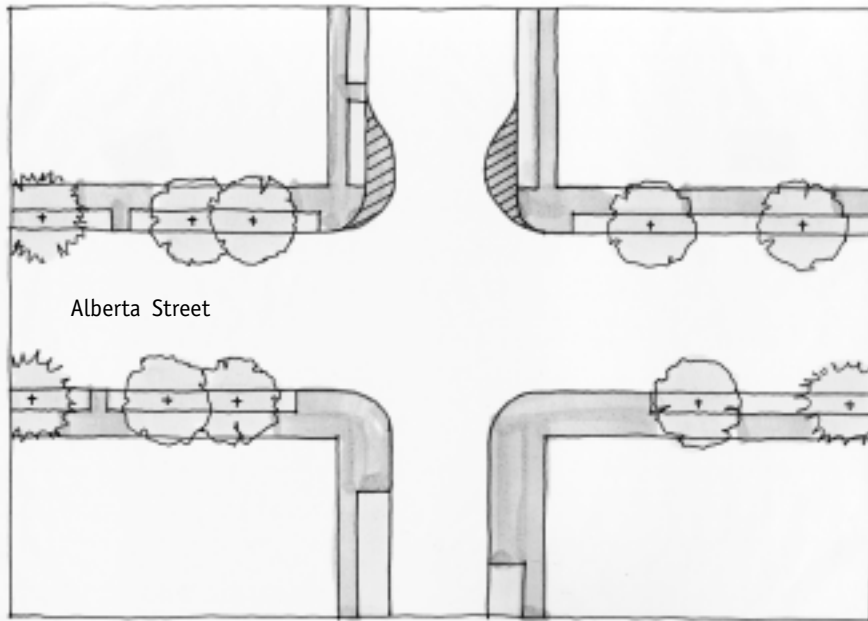
## Curb Extensions on Residential Streets

The streets of 31st Avenue, 32nd Avenue and 32nd Place are wider than the other residential streets which enter Alberta and receive more through traffic. To narrow the entries to these streets and slow traffic, short curb extensions will be placed on both sides of 31st Avenue, 32nd Avenue, and 32nd Place where the streets meet Alberta. These extensions will not continue around the corner onto Alberta. All of the extensions will include curb ramps for accessibility at the corners.



*Curb extensions at the entries of selected residential streets will help slow traffic entering these streets.*

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*Short curb extensions will be placed on 31st Avenue, 32nd Avenue and 32nd Place north of Alberta to narrow the entries to these streets and slow traffic.*

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# SCHOOL CROSSINGS

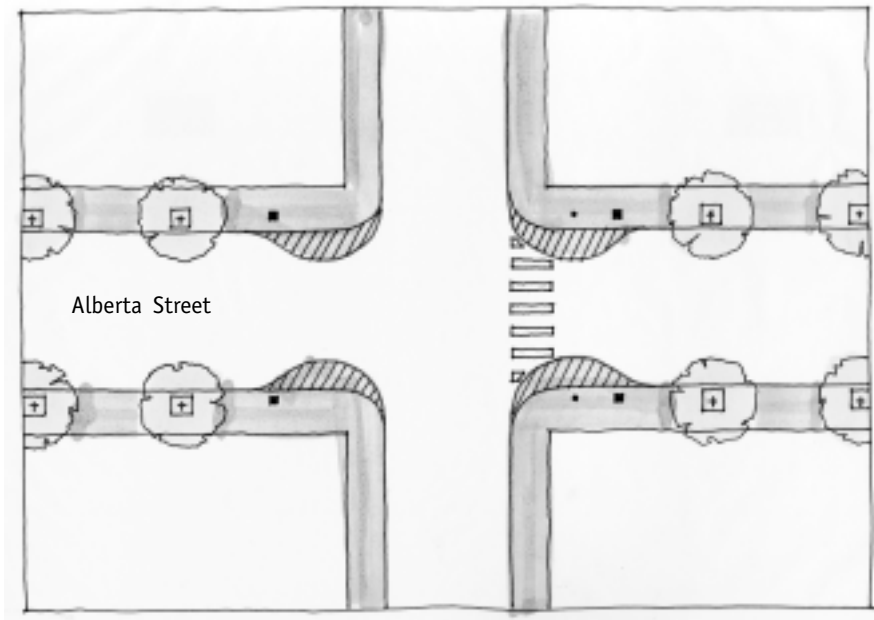
Traffic does not slow significantly at the school crossings at 21st and 6th. To make crossings more visible and decrease the crossing distance, both intersections will receive curb extensions (with curb ramps) on all four corners, new crosswalks painted on the eastern crossing, and new overhead flashing beacons. The crossing at 6th will receive short curb extensions on all corners; the existing medians will be removed. The transit stops at 20th and 22nd will be consolidated into one stop at 21st with the school crossing. The intersection at 21st will receive transit curb extensions at the two transit stops and short curb extensions on the other two corners.

*Improvements at school crossings will make them more visible to drivers and safer for students.*



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*School crossing improvements proposed for the intersection at 6th Avenue will include short curb extensions on all four corners and a marked crosswalk.*



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# TRANSIT STOP IMPROVEMENTS

## Transit Stop Relocations

The plan proposes relocating some transit stops to provide consistency in the stops and concentrate stops at transit transfers. Specifically:

- The existing stops at 26th and 28th on the north side of the street will be consolidated at 27th, where the line #9 crosses Alberta.
- The existing stops at 20th and 22nd will be consolidated into one stop at 21st on both sides of the street.
- The stop at 13th on the north side of the street would be moved from the far side of the intersection to the near side.
- The existing stop on the east side of 30th just north of Alberta would be relocated to the south side of Alberta before the bus turns the corner onto 30th.



*Tri-Met's line 72 bus serves Alberta Street from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to 30th Avenue.*

## Transit Stops at Signalized Intersections

Transit stops at signalized intersections (7th and 15th) will have ornamental lighting and trash cans. Curb extensions will not be placed at these intersections because they would block drivers from moving past cars waiting to turn left and would slow right-turning vehicles.

## Bus Zones

The transit stops at 11th will receive 50-60' bus zones on both sides of the street. This will provide a place for the bus to pull out of the travel lane and let traffic by if the bus stops to pick up or drop off riders. Ornamental lighting will be placed on four corners of the intersection.

## Transit Shelters

Tri-Met will install shelters with benches on curb extensions at transit stop locations on the north side (westbound) at 7th, 13th, 18th, 21st and 27th; and on the south side (eastbound) at 9th, 21st and 27th. Tri-Met also proposed a shelter for the stop at 9th on the north side of the street. Due to problems with loitering and illegal activities at that corner, the project advisory committee recommended that the existing bench remain and no shelter be placed there.

Specific location and orientation of shelters will be determined during the engineering phase of the project and will follow the guidelines established in the intergovernmental agreement between the City of Portland and Tri-Met for locating transit shelters. Local conditions and needs will be taken into account when shelter locations are finalized.

### **Trash Cans at Transit Stops**

Trash cans at transit stops can be provided in two ways: Tri-Met's "Keep-A-Can" program or the existing community-based, adopt-a-can program run by Sabin CDC. More information on trash cans is located in the Street Furniture section and in the Technical Appendix.

### **Curb Extensions at Transit Stops**

As described in the Transportation and Pedestrian Improvements section, most of the transit stops will receive long curb extensions which allow the buses to stop in the travel lane and decrease transit delay.

## **BIKE IMPROVEMENTS**

The plan does not recommend bike lanes on Alberta because the existing right of way will not accommodate them unless on-street parking is removed. The community's priority is to retain on-street parking to support businesses along the street. In addition, Alberta is not a designated bike route in the city's Bicycle Master Plan.

New staple-type bike racks will be installed on each block to provide safe bicycle parking along Alberta Street. In addition, some custom bike racks may be designed and installed through the public art program (see public art section for more information).

*Additional racks will provide more bike parking on Alberta Street.*



# ENTRIES TO THE STREET

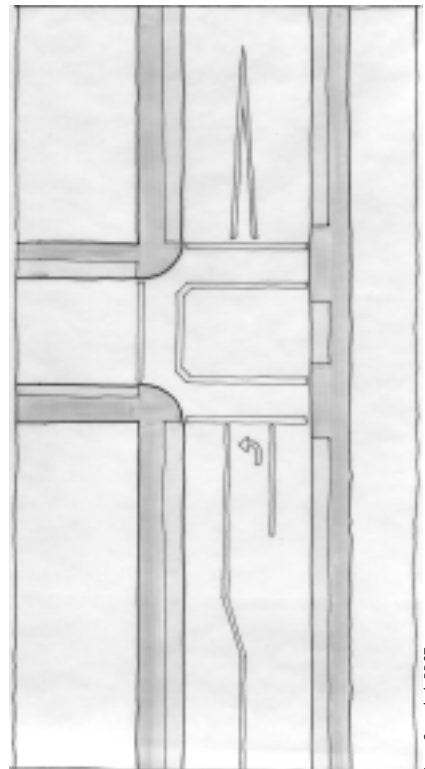
Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. and N.E. 33rd form the formal entries to this section of Alberta Street. The community has expressed a strong desire to make these “entryways” prominent and unique to the Alberta business district. A special concrete paving material will mark the eastern crossing at the intersection of MLK and the western crossing at the intersection of 33rd. Double-hung banners and ornamental lighting will provide vertical elements to identify the street’s entries to those who pass by on MLK and on 33rd.



*The entry to Alberta from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard will be more visible with the addition of new street lights, banners, and a special paving material in the crosswalk.*

## Intersection Improvements at 33rd

On northbound 33rd Avenue, traffic often backs up behind left-turning vehicles waiting for a gap to turn left onto Alberta Street. A left-turn lane will be marked on northbound 33rd to provide a waiting place for vehicles turning left onto Alberta and ensure enough room for through traffic to continue northbound on 33rd. This will require removal of approximately 120' of parking on the west side of 33rd south of Alberta to provide room for the turn lane.



*The proposed left turn lane on 33rd will provide a place for turning vehicles to wait.*

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## STREET LIGHTING



*Recommended street light for Alberta Street.*

Ornamental lighting will be added to Alberta Street to increase the light on the street and enhance pedestrian safety. In addition, the lighting will help create a unique identity and consistent image for the street, and it will mark the entries to the street at Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and 33rd. Some additional lighting improvements on Alberta and up to 100' back from Alberta on cross streets have already been made to improve light levels on the street.

The plan recommends placing ornamental lighting on all four corners at all major intersections, school crossings and transit stops for the initial phase of construction, with the opportunity to place lighting at the remaining intersections should additional funding become available.

The intersections receiving lighting in the initial phase will include: MLK Jr. Blvd., 6th, 7th, 9th, 11th, 13th, 15th, 18th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 24th, 27th, 30th and 33rd.

The type of light recommended is the ZED Z47G placed on the city's standard single ornamental base and painted dark green.



*Recommended light pole for Alberta Street.*

## STREET TREES

Street trees will be added to the street to provide greenery and shade in the summer, and to help create a consistent image for the street. Approximately six trees per block face will be added on both sides of the street. Property owners will be able to choose the type of tree from a list of trees selected by the project staff in consultation with the city's urban forester and recommended by the project advisory committee. New street trees will be required of new development that precedes construction of this project.

### Tree Types

Recommended trees for the commercial area (MLK to 30th) are: Raywood Ash, Goldenrain, Pacific Sunset Maple, Kousa Dogwood, and Queen Elizabeth Hedge Maple. For the residential area from 30th to 33rd, two additional trees, Japanese Snowbell and Newport Plum, also will be available. If these trees are not available at the time of planting, equivalent trees approved by the urban forester and project manager may be substituted.



### Tree Installation

The preferred method for installing the trees is the model established by the Urban Tree Planting Project for the Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. project. Under this program, created in cooperation with the Urban League, local youths were trained to plant street trees and performed the work for a segment of the MLK project. However, this method of installation does not include tree maintenance for two years to ensure proper care. Proper maintenance needs to be addressed before this installation model can be used; otherwise, landscape contractors who can provide the necessary maintenance will install the trees.



*Street trees will be planted along the block faces on Alberta Street to add greenery and shade to the street.*

### Tree Maintenance

Tree maintenance and leaf removal are the responsibility of the property owner per Portland City Code. Tree limbs and branches must be trimmed to leave 7' - 6" clear above the level of the sidewalk.

There may be some interest to organize local volunteers through a local organization, such as the Alberta Business Association, a neighborhood association or Sabin CDC, to sweep leaves in the fall or to provide pruning assistance.

### Tree Wells

Tree wells will be 3' by 6' in size west of 14th Place where the sidewalk width is 10 feet, and the wells will be 4' by 6' east of 14th Place where the sidewalk width is 12 feet. In the residential areas, trees will be planted in the grass planting strip.

In the commercial areas, the tree wells will be left bare for business and property owners to plant small gardens. There may be some opportunity under the public art program to design and install custom pavers for the tree wells.



*Several business owners plant and maintain colorful flower gardens in the tree wells to brighten the street.*

## Summary of Street Trees for Alberta Street

### Commercial Areas

Five tree types are recommended for the commercial area of Alberta Street from NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to NE 30th Avenue.



### Golden Rain Tree

Height	30'
Spread	30'
Shape	Rounded
Foliage	Medium green
Fall Color	Yellow
Flower	Bright yellow in large clusters



### Queen Elizabeth Hedge Maple

Height	35'
Spread	30'
Shape	Upright branching, oval
Foliage	Dark green
Fall Color	Yellowish



### Pacific Sunset Maple

Height	30'
Spread	25'
Shape	Upright, rounded
Foliage	Dark green, glossy
Fall Color	Yellow-orange to bright red

*Street tree photographs from: Street Tree Factsheets, 1993; Henry D. Gerhold, Norman Lacasse, and Willet N. Wandell, editors; Pennsylvania State University*

**Kousa Dogwood**

Height	20'
Spread	20'
Shape	Vase shaped, rounded
Foliage	Light green
Fall Color	Red to reddish
Flowers	White or pink



**Raywood Ash**

Height	25'
Spread	25'
Shape	Oval
Foliage	Narrow green leaflets, fine textured
Fall Color	Reddish-purple



**Residential Areas**

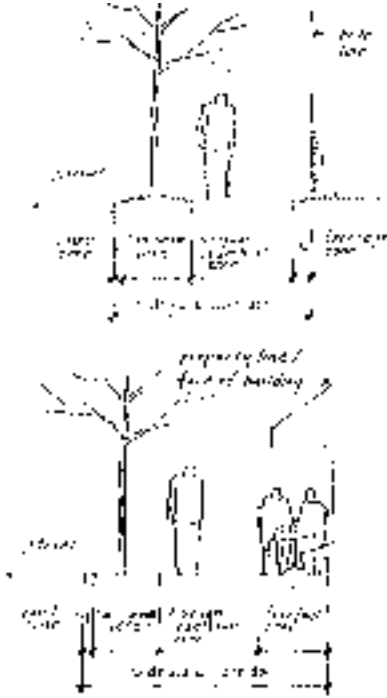
Street trees for the residential area east of 30th include the Hedge Maple and Dogwood trees for the commercial areas, and the Newport Plum and Japanese Snowbell.

# STREET FURNITURE AND FURNISHING ZONE

## Definition of Zones in the Sidewalk Corridor

According to the City of Portland's *Pedestrian Design Guide*, the sidewalk corridor contains four distinct zones: the curb zone, the furnishing zone, the through pedestrian zone and the frontage zone.

The curb zone helps define the pedestrian environment within the streetscape. The furnishing zone buffers pedestrians from the adjacent roadway, and is also the area where elements such as street trees, utility poles, street lights, hydrants, signs, and street furniture are properly located. The through pedestrian zone is the area intended for pedestrian travel and should be entirely free of permanent and temporary objects. The frontage zone is the area between the through pedestrian zone and the property line. This zone allows pedestrians a comfortable "shy" distance from the building fronts, and also provides a place for private, temporary uses, such as sidewalk cafes (where allowed by code) as long as the through pedestrian zone is maintained.



The diagrams above illustrate the four zones of the sidewalk corridor.

## Furnishing Zone Treatment

In the commercial area on Alberta Street from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to 30th, the furnishing zone (or planting strip area) will be paved with standard concrete. This will provide additional sidewalk space for street furniture, such as benches and trash cans, and for bike racks which must be bolted into a solid concrete surface. This also will help clean up the street by eliminating dirt and gravel areas which tend to gather weeds and litter. Property owners who have existing planted areas may request an exemption from the concrete planting strip in the commercial area if they agree to continue to maintain the plantings.

In the residential area from 30th to 33rd, the planting strip will remain as grass and will continue to be maintained by the adjacent property owner.

Where the furnishings zone is left unpaved (near right), litter and debris accumulate, detracting from the street's appearance. Paved furnishings zones (far right) provide places for street furniture, bike racks and other amenities.



## Street Furniture

### Planters

Individual property or business owners, or organizations such as the business association or other groups, may choose to purchase or design planters which meet the guidelines for placement on the street. The owner of the planters would be responsible for maintenance. There also may be an opportunity to design and place planters as part of the public art program.

Movable planters are permitted in the furnishings zone if the zone is at least 3'-0" or in the frontage zone if the minimum through pedestrian zone is maintained. Planters require a permit from the City Engineer and are limited to a projection of 1'-6" into the right of way. Maintenance of planters is the responsibility of the adjacent property owners. (Source: *Portland Pedestrian Design Guide*, page A-6.)

### Banners

The banners on Alberta Street were created and installed under a program coordinated by Sabin CDC, who received a grant from the Regional Arts and Culture Council (RACC). Sabin CDC used the grant money to hire a local artist who worked with local youths to create banners. The banners are hung from utility poles and maintained by a contractor managed by Sabin CDC staff.

The banner program is expected continue under the leadership of a nonprofit volunteer group called Art on Alberta. This group will be responsible for securing funding, selecting artists, ensuring the design involves the community, and for placing and maintaining the banners.

Banners must comply with the encroachment policies set out in the Uniform Building Code, Chapter 32 and are subject to a permit from the City Engineer.



*Banners on Alberta Street were created by Sabin CDC's Summer Youth Employment Program led by artist Adriene Cruz.*

### **Benches**

Individual property or business owners, or organizations such as the business association or other groups may choose to purchase or design benches which meet the guidelines for placement on the street. The owner of the bench would be responsible for maintenance. There may be an opportunity to design and place benches as part of the public art program.

Benches are permitted by the City Engineer and must be no larger than 2'-6" wide by 8'-0" long and 3'-6" high. Benches may be placed in the furnishing zone where the zone is at least 3'-0" wide, or within the frontage zone when the zone is greater than 3'-0". Benches should generally face the through pedestrian zone.



*Trash cans currently on Alberta Street were produced by Sabin CDC's Alberta Links Local Youth (ALLY) Program led by artist Adriene Cruz.*

### **Trash Cans**

The trash cans on Alberta Street were created and installed under a program coordinated by Sabin CDC with a grant from the Regional Arts and Culture Council (RACC). Sabin CDC hired local artist Adriene Cruz who worked with youths from the Blazers Boys and Girls Club to create the designs and paint the cans. So far, 15 trash cans have been "adopted" by local business owners who have agreed to empty the cans when needed. The trash can program is coordinated by Sabin CDC staff members.

Community members and business owners have expressed a desire to increase the number of trash cans on the street and to continue the program established by Sabin CDC.

## **SIDEWALKS**

### **Sidewalk Repair**

Some portions of the existing sidewalk need repair. Sidewalks affected by the new construction, and corners requiring new curb ramps, will be rebuilt as part of the project. Sidewalk repair or reconstruction also will be required of new development on the street as it occurs.

### **Curb Ramps**

The city's Bureau of Maintenance will build curb ramps on remaining corners not receiving improvements as part of this plan. This will be done as part of the city's ADA curb ramp program.



*Some of the older sidewalk on Alberta Street is in disrepair.*

### **Sidewalks at Alley Crossings**

Alleys intersect Alberta between the cross streets from 24th to 33rd. Where the sidewalk crosses the alley, the alley area will be raised to sidewalk level and paved to provide a continuous sidewalk along Alberta. The area between the new sidewalk and existing street will be paved, sloping toward the street to meet the existing street grade. The alley will be paved at least six feet from the sidewalk to meet the existing grade of the alley and prevent gravel from spilling onto the sidewalk as cars move through.



*Most of the alley crossings are unpaved and lack curb ramps.*

## **PUBLIC ART**

The city will be contracting with an artist/consultant to develop the public art element for the plan. The artist is expected to work with community representatives to identify and prioritize the best ways to incorporate art into street furniture and streetscape elements, and to identify other types of streetscape elements, such as water fountains or street sign caps, that can be incorporated into the overall design for the street.

The final product will include a prioritized list of elements, suggested materials, recommended process for selecting the artist, medium and approval of final design, and cost estimates. The public art element will be finished in March 2000 and presented to council as an addendum to this plan.



*Browning-Shono Architects*

*At the February, 1999 open house, community members generated ideas for incorporating art into the streetscape of Alberta. Suggestions included art elements in tree wells and sidewalk areas, signs, benches and bike racks.*





## FUNDING SOURCES

The portion of Alberta Street from NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard through NE 15th Avenue is part of the Oregon Convention Center Urban Renewal Area (OCCURA) and eligible for funding from the urban renewal district. As of November, 1999, the Portland Development Commission had committed approximately \$1,080,000 to build the recommended improvements on this portion of the street.

The remainder of the project area, from NE 15th Avenue through NE 33rd, is not in the urban renewal district, and therefore, not eligible for district money. Possible funding sources to build the recommended improvements on this segment include:

- Portland Office of Transportation (PDOT) through its Capital Improvement Program (CIP), primarily funded by General Transportation Revenues (gas taxes, parking fees, fines and interest).
- Portland Development Commission (PDC) through programs unrelated to the urban renewal area.
- Grants from a variety of sources, including federal, state, regional and private agencies.

## COST ESTIMATES

Preliminary estimates for building the recommended improvements on NE Alberta Street are approximately:

- \$1.2 million from N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. through N. E. 15th Avenue.
- \$1.9 million from N. E. 15th Avenue through N. E. 33rd Avenue.

Revised cost estimates will be prepared in the spring of 2000 when design and engineering work are complete.

## **PHASING**

Through the public outreach activities conducted as part of the planning process, the community voiced a preference to build all of the recommended improvements from NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to NE 33rd Avenue at the same time. However, the money to build improvements from NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard through 15th Avenue may be available before funding is secured for the remainder of the street. In this case, the project would be constructed in two phases: Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard through 15th Avenue and from 15th Avenue through 33rd. Avenue.

## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ON ALBERTA STREET**

New development and significant redevelopment on Alberta Street will be required to make improvements to the adjacent right-of-way that conform with the recommended improvements in this plan. These will include:

- Rebuild or repair sidewalk that does not meet city standards.
- In commercial areas, pave the furnishings zone with concrete if not already paved, and repair any concrete in the furnishing zone that does not meet city standard.
- Plant street trees that conform to the plan's recommendations for tree type, size and location, and that are approved by the city's urban forester.

## NEXT STEPS

The implementation process for the Alberta Streetscape Plan will include the following steps:

- Present the Alberta Streetscape Plan to the Portland City Council for adoption, by resolution, as the guiding document for public right-of-way improvements along Alberta Street.
- Continue to work with the Alberta Project Advisory Committee for the implementation phase of the project.
- Work with the Alberta Business Association to plan and schedule construction in a manner that minimizes impacts on businesses on Alberta Street.
- Continue working with Sabin Community Development Corporation, the Alberta Business Association and the community to define public art projects, identify funding sources, write or support grant applications for public art and facilitate installation of art on the street.
- Seek and secure funding to construct recommended improvements from 15th Avenue to 33rd Avenue.



# RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE ALBERTA STREETScape PLAN

## RESOLUTION No. **35862**

Adopt the recommendations in the draft Alberta Streetscape Plan (Resolution)

WHEREAS, Northeast Alberta Street is an important neighborhood commercial street serving community and business needs; and

WHEREAS, the Albina Community Plan, the Oregon Convention Center Urban Renewal Area, the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard Commercial Development Strategy, the King Neighborhood Plan, and the Concordia Neighborhood Plan recommend transportation and streetscape improvements to Northeast Alberta Street between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and 33rd Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the Alberta Streetscape Project Advisory Committee and the community identified goals for the plan to:

- Create a better walking environment and safer pedestrian crossings along Alberta Street;
- Slow traffic on the street and minimize traffic impacts on surrounding neighborhood streets;
- Provide balance between and access for all transportation modes;
- Ensure adequate on-street parking is available;
- Add more trees and plants to the street;
- Make the street a safe, clean and well-lit place;
- Incorporate art and color into streetscape elements; and
- Involve the community in a meaningful way to develop a plan that is firmly grounded in the community and that reflects the diversity of people, uses and transportation needs; and

WHEREAS, the Alberta Streetscape Plan identifies locations for improvements that include improved pedestrian crossings, curb extensions, enhanced transit stops, ornamental lighting, street trees and other street improvements to improve the safety and visual character of the street;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Portland recommends adoption of the Alberta Streetscape Plan attached as Exhibit A; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that staff is directed to engage in activities to implement the improvements described in the Alberta Streetscape Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council gratefully acknowledges the excellent work and dedication of the members of the Alberta Streetscape Project Advisory Committee and other community members who helped shape the plan through participation in the planning process.

Adopted by the Council, **FEB 09 2000**

Commissioner Susan Huns  
Lynn Weiland sig  
March 11, 2000  
PT

GARY BLACKMER  
ALDERMAN OF THE CITY OF PORTLAND  
BY *Gary Blackmer*  
1999.03