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## PAALF People's Plan: East Portland Pilot

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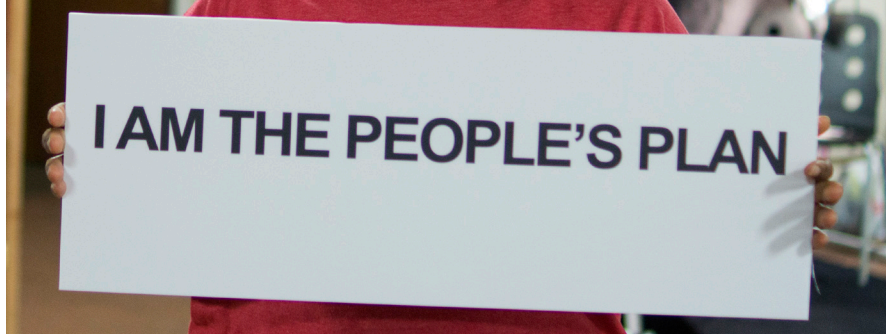
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# PAALF PEOPLE'S PLAN: EAST PORTLAND PILOT

*A project of the PORTLAND AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP FORUM*

Master of Urban and Regional Planning 2015 Workshop - Portland State University

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PORTLAND AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP FORUM



Portland State UNIVERSITY





**PAALF PEOPLE'S  
PLAN**

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# ABOUT US

## **PAALF PEOPLE'S PLAN**

The plan will frame the policy agenda, project the vision for a thriving Black community, and advance community-initiated projects that benefit Africans and African Americans living in Portland, Oregon. By viewing the community as the drivers of change, the PAALF People's Plan will serve as a powerful tool for organizing, advocacy, and implementation; empowering the Portland Black community to assert their right to actively shape the city they live in.

## **EAST PORTLAND PILOT PLAN**

The pilot plan focuses on the needs and priorities of Africans and African Americans who have settled in East Portland as a result of displacement from inner city neighborhoods and the search for affordable housing. Recognizing the traumatic experience of being forced to move and losing community, this plan reflects the hopes of community members who seek to rebuild their lives in a new place. The East Portland Pilot Plan proposes a starting point toward this purpose.

# THE TEAM

## PAALF PEOPLE'S PLAN TEAM

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*Portland African American Leadership Forum*

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## EAST PORTLAND PILOT PLAN STUDENT TEAM

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**Community Engagement Manager** | Lorrie Chang

**Data and Content Managers** | DH Strongheart and Timothy Wood

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SueZet Hoourd, Beshura Kame, Tony Lamb, Lisa Mathis, Debra Mayfield,  
Robin Mayfield, Nicole Parker, Doris Stevenson, Antwoine Thomas, Nyanga Uuka

# FROM THE STUDENT TEAM

We are the graduate students behind the East Portland Pilot Plan and while two of us are people of color, not a single one of us identifies as African or African American. None of us can speak from the experience of being Black in one of the whitest major cities in the nation [1]. So what place do brown and white students have in the People's Plan?

As a team, we gave considerable reflection to this topic. Can we contribute anything valuable to this process? What validity do we have in this community? To answer these questions we started by looking inwardly to our personal experiences, privileges and biases that we carry with us. Ultimately, we recognize our limitations with fully understanding the Black experience in Portland. Our personal reflections can be found in Appendix I.

As students, however, we have the privilege to learn the field of urban planning, and with that, its incredible power to influence the everyday lives of people in cities. We acknowledge the history of racial exclusion, segregation, disinvestment, gentrification and displacement here. We see the pattern of uneven development and how it contributes to disparities for low income people and communities of color. Finally, we understand the connection of these outcomes to planning decisions.

As future planners, we have a moral responsibility to work for racial and spatial justice [2]. We believe that community development demands a Black voice in decision-making [3]. That is why throughout the pilot process we sought to empower the voices of community members. In doing this work, however, we realized the need for healing in Portland, as our community workshops transformed into spaces for remembering, sharing, and dreaming.

We stand at a pivotal moment in history as the Civil Rights Movement resurges. Community uprisings throughout our nation, from Ferguson to New York to Baltimore, urgently remind us that Black Lives Matter. Therefore, we ally ourselves with PAALF leadership to assert the people's right to shape the places where they live. We come to this process humbled to stand beside, collaborate, and support this important work. We hope that the contributions of this work are a meaningful step forward.

In solidarity,  
Christine, D.H., Leslee, Lorrie, Tim, and Todd

[1] Badger, E. (2015, March 24). How the whitest city in America appears through the eyes of its black residents. The Washington Post. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/>

[2] AICP Code of Ethics

[3] Bates, L. (2015). This is gentrification. In Urban League of Portland (Ed.), State of Black Oregon. Retrieved from <http://ulpdx.org/>



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Midland Library  
David Douglas High School  
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Victory Outreach Church

## **PAALF**

Robin Johnson, Executive Committee Co-Chair  
Dr. T. Allen Bethel, Executive Committee Co-Chair  
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## **PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY WORKSHOP FACULTY**

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Shane Valle

# INTRODUCTION

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# INTRODUCTION

In 2014, conversations emerged among the Portland African American Leadership Forum (PAALF) and Black leaders to develop a People’s Plan that would articulate a vision for Black Portland and help frame the policy agenda for ongoing advocacy. In January 2015, PAALF began a collaboration with Portland State University (PSU) graduate students in urban and regional planning. PAALF expressed interest in developing a pilot project focused on Africans and African Americans in East Portland who had been historically displaced by gentrification, while the graduate students were seeking a capstone planning project. None of the students identified as Black, however they championed PAALF’s project proposal, and thus was born the East Portland Pilot Plan (EPPP).

The PAALF People’s Plan focuses on Black populations in North, Northeast and East Portland experiencing the impacts of gentrification and displacement in three distinct phases:

- Those who have not been displaced, but would like to **STAY** in their current neighborhood;
- Those who have been displaced, but would like to **RETURN** to their old neighborhood; and
- Those who have been displaced, and would like to **BUILD ROOTS** in their new neighborhood.

The East Portland Pilot Plan (EPPP) focuses on the third phase by identifying planning tools and action items that can help people in East Portland to build roots and a sense of place in their new neighborhood after having been pushed out of the heart of the Black community that was North and Northeast Portland.

While gentrification and displacement have historically impacted African Americans in Portland, the broader context of the PAALF People’s Plan also recognizes displacement experienced by African immigrants and refugees who “land” in Portland. A universal theme amongst Black Portlanders is the loss of social and cultural ties and the need for healing and dialogue [1]. This pilot plan serves as a starting point to shed light on the specific needs of Africans and African Americans in East Portland.

[1] Throughout this plan, references to Black Portlanders refers both to African American residents and African immigrant and refugees.

## OVERVIEW OF PAALF PEOPLE'S PLAN: EAST PORTLAND PILOT PLAN

Recognizing the traumatic experience of being forced to move and losing community, this plan reflects the hopes of community members who seek to rebuild their lives in a new place. The East Portland Pilot Plan applies the urban planning practice of placemaking as a transformative intervention for addressing challenges and stabilizing the Black community in East Portland. This plan also emerges at a critical time, as existing city plans for East Portland indicate significant future public investment and development.

### EAST PORTLAND PILOT PLAN GOALS

- 1** Strengthen networks among Africans and African Americans in East Portland, while enabling capacity building;
- 2** Elevate the profile of issues unique to Africans and African Americans within East Portland, and within the broader African and African American community in Portland; and
- 3** Provide a strategic roadmap for placemaking in East Portland that prioritizes African and African American issues.

## DOCUMENT OVERVIEW

This plan has been written with a wide audience in mind. The material is relevant to homeowners, community activists, urban planners, nonprofit advocates and policymakers among others. The East Portland Pilot Plan is on the one hand a portrait of the Black community in East Portland; a portrait that has been narrated largely by the people themselves, and recorded in this document. On the other hand, the EPPP is a guide to action, a toolkit to address some of the most persistent issues facing Africans and African Americans and a roadmap to a thriving and vibrant Black community in East Portland.

Chapter 1 - People & Place, provides a brief overview of the racial and spatial injustice that Africans and African Americans have experienced in Portland. This chapter provides the rationale behind the pilot plan area. It also describes how placemaking practices can address “root shock” for displaced communities that have had to cope with neighborhood change and loss of culture [1].

Chapter 2 - Community Engagement, describes the public engagement process and subsequent findings [2]. Throughout the public engagement process, the student team made a number of planning, prioritizing and strategic decisions. In order to ensure transparency of this process, this chapter outlines the goals of our outreach and engagement and how we adapted our strategy in response to our ongoing findings.

Chapter 3 - Recommendations, reflects a vision for the Black community in East Portland by outlining goals, strategies and actions for four key thematic areas that rose to the top during the public engagement process.

Chapter 4 - Moving Forward, suggests a framework for where to go from here. We conclude the East Portland Pilot Plan by offering up tasks for urban planners and community members in conjunction with PAALF People’s Plan for achieving racial and spatial justice.

[1] Information on some of the major themes we expected to encounter in this project (i.e. best practices to ameliorate displacement) can be found in the supplemental Background and Existing Conditions Report.

[2] A more in-depth account of our public engagement process can be found in Appendix II and in the supplemental Community Engagement Strategy.

1

# PEOPLE & PLACE



05

## MY STORY

“My experiences of homelessness [brought me to East Portland]...it's kinda like there was a community outside of the homeless community that brought me over here because it kinda felt more like home... It's kinda hard to say that I don't live here because I've been back and forth...I have a lot of family on the Eastside...this is my second home from North Portland.”

## MY CHALLENGE

“I never planned to be homeless. It was an inevitable thing to happen. Yes it's something I could overcome, but it takes time... The greatest lesson I learned is that homelessness is not forever. Opportunity and chance happens to every man.”

## MY DREAM

“These communities are in need of mentors. They don't understand the life and chances that are happening to them The greatest lesson I could also learn is knowing my enviroment, navigating it, and avoiding mistakes. I was seldomly taught in my early stages as a child in my community about life and chance.”

# ANTWOINE THOMAS

Age: 26

An Artist

A Filmmaker

An Inspiration

---

Antwoine produced a film on his experience with homelessness with Project Viewfinder entitled, “Two Men”. He also painted the mural outside the Rosewood Initiative.

## PEOPLE AND PLACE

People and place are inherently connected; places determine people's quality of life. Historic injustices have forced Africans and African Americans to know this more intimately than any other group in Portland. Being pushed out to undesirable and disinvested neighborhoods that lack the culture and social fabric of their home neighborhoods has been a traumatic experience for many African and African American people. East Portland is one of the landing zones for people that are being priced out of the urban core.

It is also an area that is vulnerable to future gentrification as the city grows and new investments are prioritized in Portland's centers and corridors. While it might seem like a hopeless situation, the practice of placemaking offers an empowering, community-driven approach to (re)building social fabric and strengthening communities disproportionately impacted by place-based planning decisions.



1909 Albina District



1948 Vanport Flood





1973 Emmanuel Hospital Expansion

08

“Being forced to move. That goes back centuries. We still carry that trauma. I am carrying it right now. People need that healing because without healing people will be walking around in survival mode, not caring about one another”

**East Portland Participant**

[www.pdxpeoplesplan.org](http://www.pdxpeoplesplan.org)

# AFRICAN AMERICANS IN PORTLAND

## A HISTORY OF SPATIAL INJUSTICE

At the turn of the 20th Century, African American businesses and civil society organizations were thriving. Prior to 1920, most Blacks could buy or rent homes wherever they wanted, with a few exceptions where restrictive covenants and exclusionary clauses in real estate deeds prohibited sale of certain parcels of land to non-whites [1]. By 1920, however, the Portland Realty Board had adopted a new code of ethics that would prevent the sale of homes in white neighborhoods to non-whites due to the perceived risk of decreasing property values [2]. Housing segregation practices drove most African Americans to the Albina area.

During WWII Portland saw a huge increase in Black population as Oregon Shipbuilding company recruited workers and built housing in what was known as Vanport. In 1948, Vanport was swept away by a flood because it was constructed in the floodplain between Columbia River and Columbia Slough. The disaster funneled African American flood victims to the Albina neighborhood that had become an area of concentrated poverty.

### 1900's

1,100 African Americans lived in PDX. Many were employed by and lived near Portland Hotel.

### 1920's

Former KKK member elected Governor and Portland Realty Board adopts housing segregation practices.

### 1940's

Vanport work housing created on a floodplain and results in thousands of victims from the flood of 1948.

[1] City of Portland, 1993

[2] Gibson, 2007

“There’s a lot of overt racism that happens here and so I always try to teach the kids historically why things are the way that they are...like the history of Vanport...maybe as a young person you might not experience blatant racism but you experience systematic racism all the time.”

East Portland Participant

## AFRICAN AMERICANS IN PORTLAND

### A HISTORY OF SPATIAL INJUSTICE

The 1950's and 1960's brutally disrupted the lives of residents in the Albina District through urban renewal policies. Urban Renewal planned to convert the heart of the Black community into commercial, industrial and institutional uses. Homes and businesses were bulldozed and residents displaced to make room for a growing downtown office district, light industry, warehouses, highways, as well as the expansion of institutions such as Emanuel Hospital, Portland State College, Memorial Coliseum, the Civic Center and the Lloyd Center [1].

By the 1980's and 90's, white migrants started buying and rehabilitating homes in the Albina neighborhood and as the population grew, the racial composition shifted. By 2010, 38% of the African American residents had moved out of North Portland and the community dispersed throughout North, Northeast and East Portland, as well as other cities like Vancouver and Gresham.

The history illuminates a pattern of serial displacement over multiple generations and compels us to create a clear pathway to prevent history from repeating itself yet again.

### 1950's/60's

Urban Renewal declared in the Albina district that bulldozed the heart of the Black community for new uses.

### 1970's/80's

Disinvestment in the Albina District: economic stagnation, housing abandonment, etc.

### 1990's

Rising property values force Black residents out of North Portland to other areas of the city and beyond.

[1] City of Portland, 1993

I used to work on Alberta St. so I saw crosswalks and 'Last Thursdays' being implemented and it went from 'Alberta' now to 'Alberta Arts District'...that neighborhood isn't what it was. That is gentrification."

**East Portland Participant**

[www.pdxpeoplesplan.org](http://www.pdxpeoplesplan.org)

## CONSEQUENCES OF GENTRIFICATION AND DISPLACEMENT

In addition to people displacement and housing displacement, gentrification also involves cultural displacement. This is particularly true in gentrifying neighborhoods with unique histories and communities with culturally or racially similar households. The displacement of Africans and African Americans from North and Northeast Portland involved immense cultural displacement. The corner stores, civil society groups, local businesses, and front porches of houses were all vessels of the city's unique Black culture.

As gentrification accelerated and was fueled by public investment, the cultural fabric embedded in so many buildings, houses and businesses was to a large extent eroded and washed away by the cultural values and aesthetics of the gentrifying middle and upper-class residents.

People in post-displacement communities experience loss of culture, livelihood, household and social fabric that is damaging to their emotional well-being.

## ROOTSHOCK

Displacement can have various starting points and historical driving forces yet a common theme is a sense of uprootedness, or root shock. Root shock can be understood as the psychological impact from the destruction of all or part of a person's emotional ecosystem, and can have long-lasting and even intergenerational effects [1].

Policymakers and urban planners have traditionally failed to take account of cultural, social and psychological impacts of root shock. We need policies and planning tools in Portland designed to help historically displaced communities cope with the long-lasting effects of root shock that affect all aspects of everyday lives.

[1] Fullilove, 2005

### African Immigrants and Refugees

Displacement can also be driven by war, famine, natural disasters, etc. Because developing countries are much more vulnerable to these types of displacement impacts than developed nations, it is likely that a large number of the African immigrants and refugees in East Portland were displaced there by such driving forces.

“I can't even describe to my children how my neighborhood looked and how everybody looked out for you. If you did something wrong and the neighbor saw you, they were either going to hit you or tell your parents. We played ball in the streets...there are all sorts of things we don't have anymore because of gentrification”

**East Portland Participant**

## PLACEMAKING AS A TRANSFORMATIVE TOOL

Placemaking can be a powerful intervention to address rootshock experienced by Africans and African Americans in East Portland that have been historically marginalized by city policies and decisions. Transformative justice can be achieved through placemaking if the African and African American community is at the center of the planning process and if they directly benefit from development outcomes of the process.

Placemaking has the potential to be a driver of gentrification and displacement if a concerted effort is not made to mitigate gentrification effects. However, placemaking can also be understood in a participatory sense, where community-building, cultural and artistic expression and place-based community assets are the focus. When approached in this way, placemaking has immense potential to help bring the process of rerooting communities in post-displacement contexts.

From this participatory perspective, placemaking is meant to strengthen the connections between community members and the places they share, and to enhance community pride in their space. It involves design, planning, management of shared resources, and articulation of community values, culture and diversity.

Based on a review of numerous placemaking projects across the U.S. we identified the following seven principles for placemaking:

1. Start with community assets and emphasize diversity;
2. Leverage place-based potential, skills, and culture. The community is the expert;
3. Make a place not a design;
4. Building a vision is just as important as building a place;
5. Integrate storytelling with placemaking;
6. Involve partners from public, private, nonprofit, and community sectors; and
7. Start with small gains, but think long-term.

Understanding the opportunity for racial and social justice in applying these principles to our community engagement work, we did our best to integrate each of these seven elements into the public engagement process with the African and African American community in East Portland. A comprehensive overview of how we did this will be provided in Chapter 2.

## DEFINING THE PILOT AREA

The East Portland pilot area was determined using three criteria:

1. Places demonstrating an increasing Black population;
2. Places vulnerable to gentrification [1]; and
3. Places with existing plans for future public investment.

Based on these criteria, the pilot area defined five census tracts that are bounded by the following streets:

SE Burnside and SE Stark Streets to the north,  
SE Powell Street and the Springwater Corridor Trail to the south,  
SE 122nd to the west, and  
SE 162nd to the east.

Figure 1. Map of Pilot Area Boundaries



[1] We determined the vulnerability to gentrification based on the Gentrification and Displacement Study completed by Dr. Lisa Bates for the City of Portland, and a subsequent update to this study completed by the city.

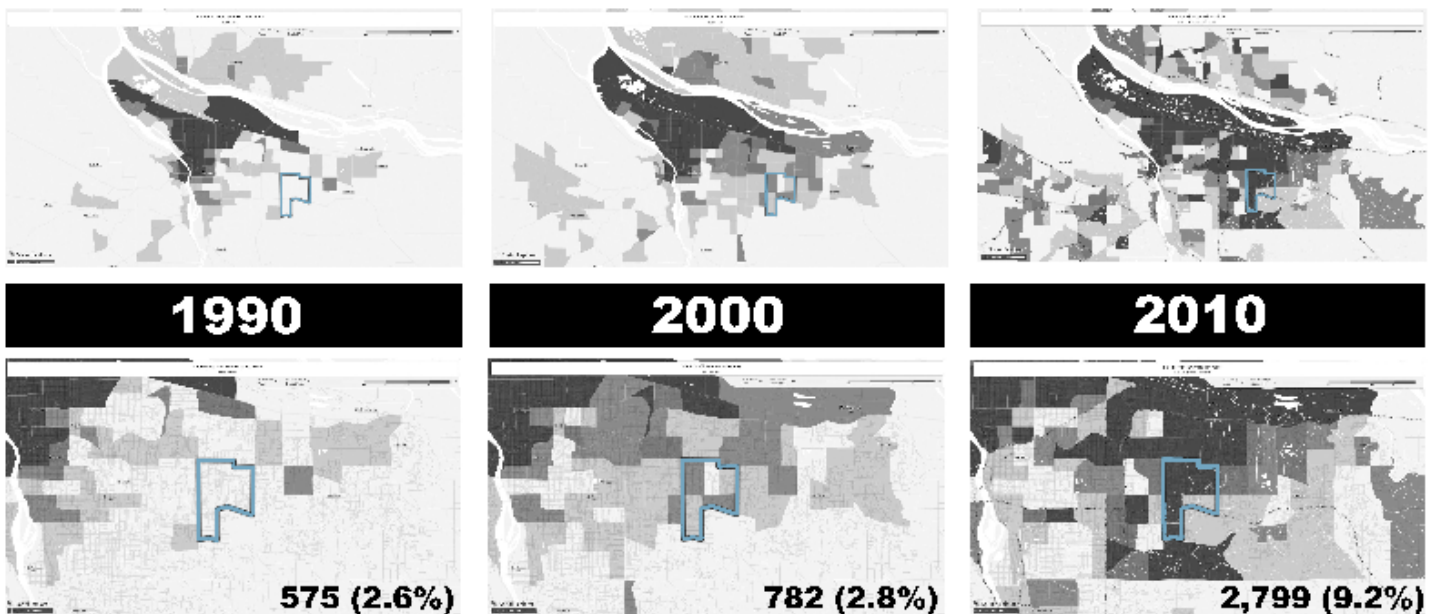
CRITERIA 1

**A PLACE IN EAST PORTLAND WITH INCREASING POPULATIONS OF BLACK RESIDENTS**

Based on U.S. Census data, only about 330 Black people lived in the pilot area in 1990. Combined census and ACS data show that over 1,800 Black people moved into the pilot area between 1990 and 2013 (Figures 2).

Figure 2. Pilot Area Population Change, 1990-2010

**African-American / African Peoples - 1990 to 2010**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Total population, Non-Hispanic : Black, 1990-2010. Prepared by Social Explorer

“My parents...purchased a piece of property out on 176th and East Burnside back in 1949. At that time there were very few African American—or, back then it was ‘Negros’—living out in East Multnomah County...my older brother...he got beat up every other day going to school...because, you know, he’s Black in a White community.”

East Portland Participant

## CRITERIA 2

### A PLACE LIKELY TO BE VULNERABLE TO GENTRIFICATION

The following section will outline key indicators of inequity and vulnerability to future displacement.

By many indicators, the pilot area is a place of extreme and concentrated inequity. Residents face higher rates of unemployment, crime and poverty than the rest of Portland, with fewer job opportunities and longer commute times to work. There are fewer homeowners in this part of East Portland than the rest of the city, and while housing is generally less expensive, residents pay a higher percentage of their income on rent. The area has a disproportionate amount of the types of land uses that other, wealthier neighborhoods refuse to accept such as strip clubs, adult businesses, mental health clinics and drug rehabilitation centers.



*Strip club on SE Division Street*



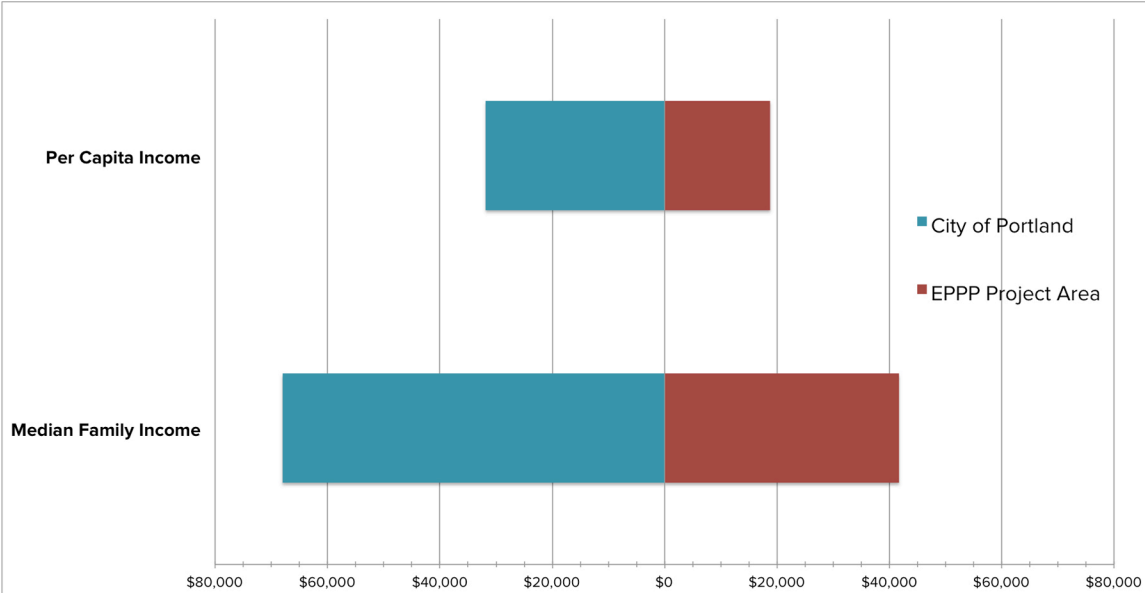
VULNERABILITY INDICATORS

MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME

The average median family income (MFI) in the pilot area is more than \$25,000 (almost 40%) below the citywide average, while per-capita income is \$18,780 in the project area as compared to \$31,839 for the rest of Portland. Meanwhile, the decline in MFI between 2000 and 2010 (presumably as a result of the Great Recession) was much steeper in the project area than in the whole of Portland. Lower incomes mean that residents are less able to cope with unexpected life events and emergencies.

PEOPLE & PLACE

Figure 3. Income Figures for City of Portland and Pilot Area



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, in 2013 inflation adjusted dollars

**POVERTY**

Poverty among children in the pilot area is nearly twice that found in the City of Portland and is higher in all other age brackets, as well. While poverty levels for Black populations are only slightly higher than in the rest of Portland, levels of poverty among White populations are nearly twice the citywide figures. A higher percentage of the population in the pilot area do not have health insurance, while a much higher percentage rely on public health coverage (42% vs. 25% citywide).

Figure 4. Poverty for City of Portland and Pilot Area

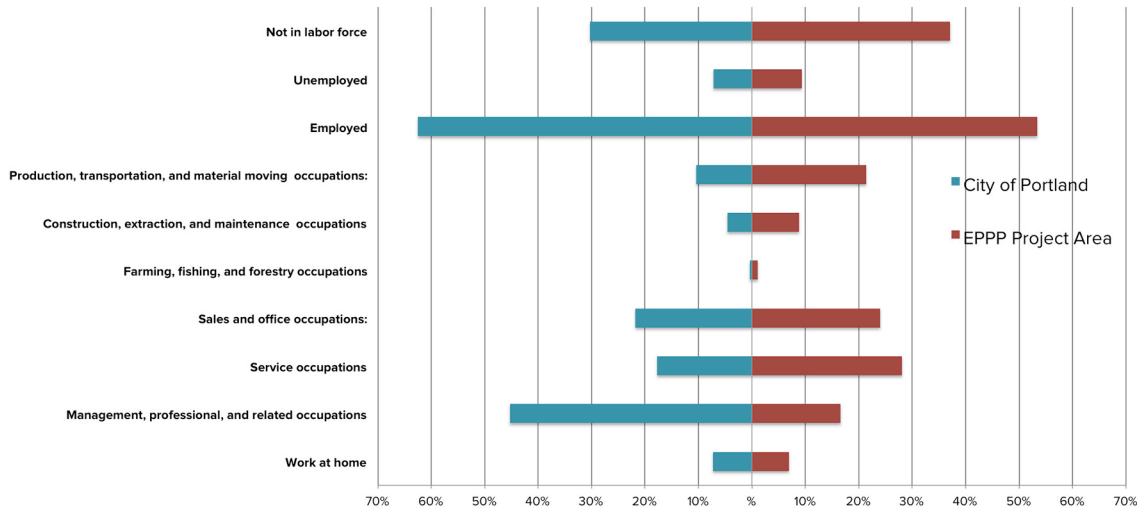


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### EMPLOYMENT

Among potential workers 16 years and older, the unemployment rate in the pilot area is 9% as compared to 7% throughout Portland. Over 37% of this group, meanwhile, is not in the labor force at all, substantially higher than the figures for Portland (30%) and a possible indication of chronic unemployment. The largest employment sectors within the pilot area itself are health care (23%); retail (19%); educational services (19%) and accommodation/food, administration and construction (7-5% each).

Figure 5. Percentage of Employment Status for City of Portland and Pilot Area

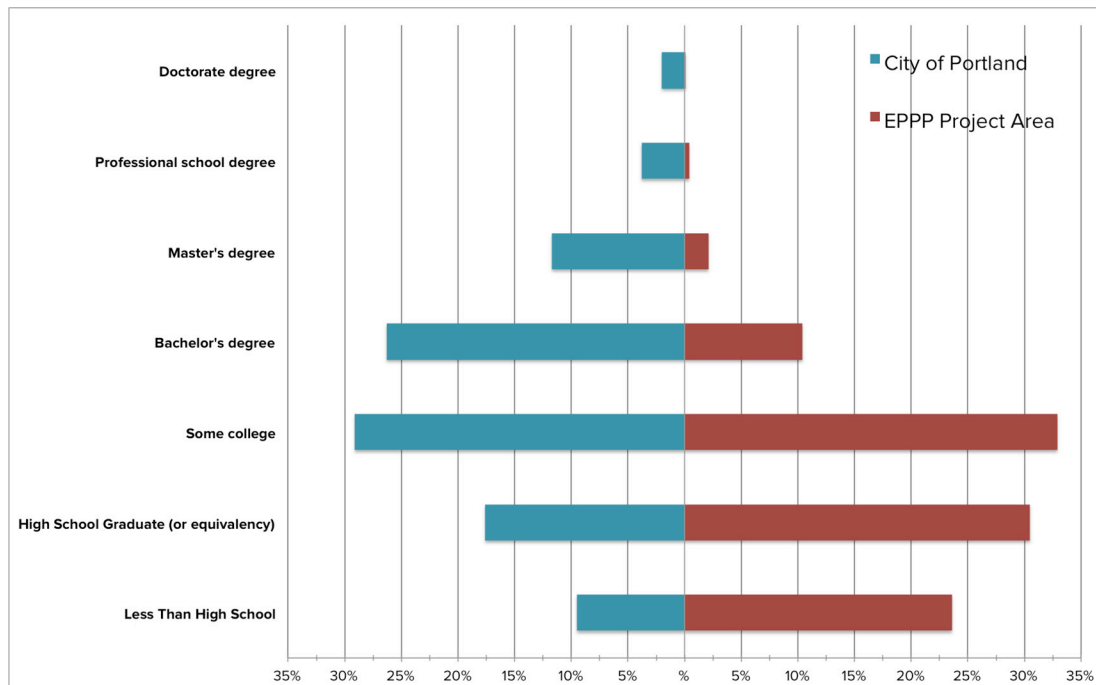


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

This large discrepancy in professional and/or managerial employment is likely a reflection of the very low levels of educational attainment in the project area. Only 13% of the area’s inhabitants hold college degrees, compared to nearly 44% across Portland. Only a small handful hold advanced degrees (under 3% compared to over 17% citywide), while high school drop-out rates are close to twice as high in the pilot area.

Figure 6. Educational Attainment for City of Portland and Pilot Area

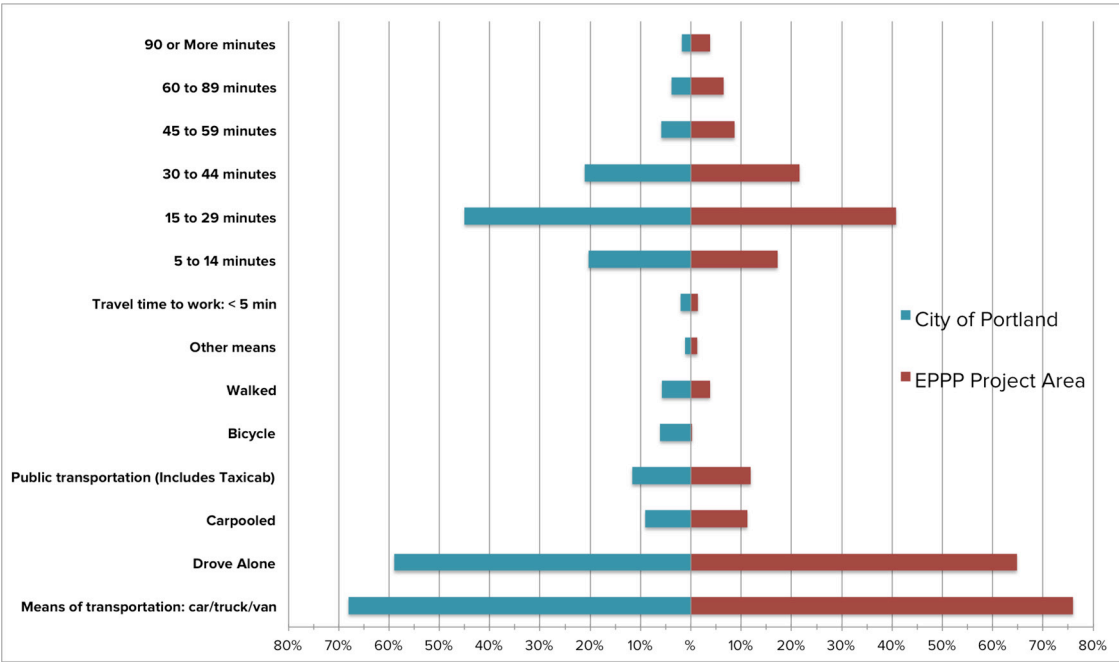


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### COMMUTE TIMES

The five census tracts comprising the pilot area of the EPPP are largely car-dependent, with over 3/4 of residents commuting to work via car, truck or van. Virtually no residents reported that they used a bicycle to commute to work, while the use of public transportation is practically identical to citywide figures. Over 10% of residents in the pilot area report a travel time to work of at least 1 hour, while nearly 20% commute at least 45 minutes (11% citywide). These commute times suggest limited employment opportunities within the pilot area.

Figure 7. Commute Times for City of Portland and Pilot Area

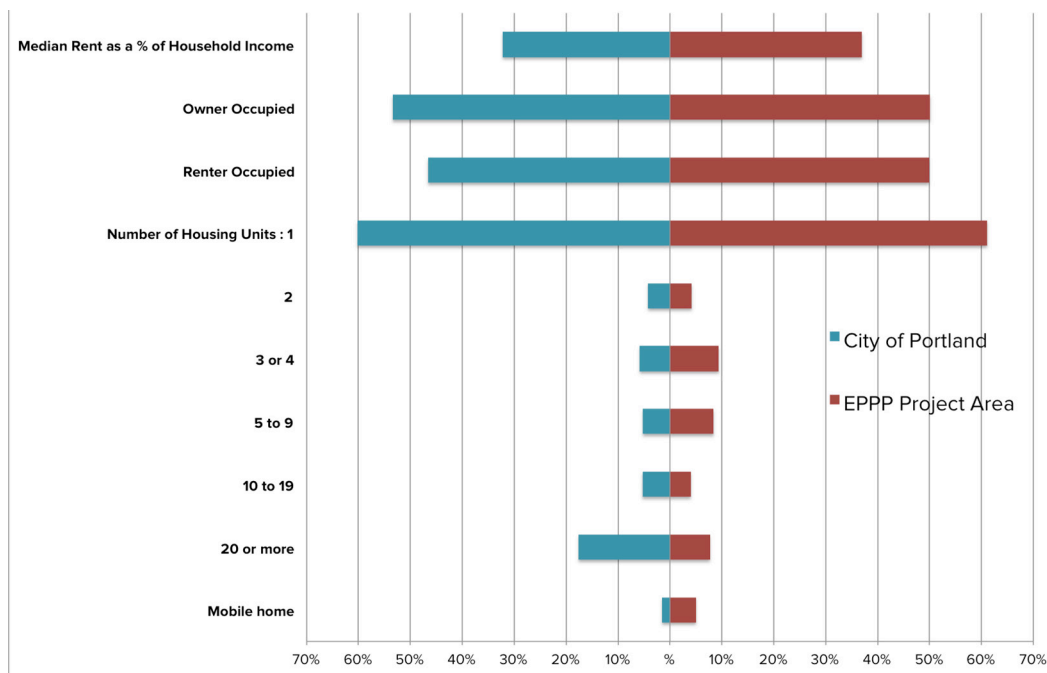


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## HOUSING

A higher portion of pilot area residents live in medium-sized multi-family housing units than is the case citywide, and 5% of inhabitants live in mobile homes. There are a slightly higher share of renters in the pilot area (50%) than in the city as a whole. People in the pilot area are more cost-burdened than the rest of Portland, spending a higher percentage of their income on housing (37%) compared to the aggregate figure for Portland (32%).

Figure 8. Housing Statistics for City of Portland and Pilot Area



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

A 2013 study on gentrification and displacement that was completed by Dr. Lisa Bates at Portland State University identified neighborhoods in Portland that were likely to be vulnerable to future gentrification. While this initial report did not specify the pilot area as vulnerable to gentrification, a more recent update to the same study by the City of Portland found that a number of risk factors for gentrification are present in the area. Many of these risk factors identified by the City are the same indicators reviewed in this section: high percentage of renters, high populations of color, low median family income and low educational attainment.

Another hallmark of gentrification is an aging stock of housing. Field research conducted by the student team revealed a high number of abandoned, dilapidated and/or dramatically under-maintained structures in the pilot area. While the median age of buildings in the project area is about 45 years-old—more than a decade younger than the rest of Portland—the lower incomes and poorer infrastructure found in the pilot area are likely to result in a higher percentage of buildings in disrepair. The presence of this large stock of aging and poorly maintained buildings is one signal that a growing rent gap [1] may be forming in the pilot area.

[1] Rent gap: The difference between current rental income and the maximum rental income on a given piece of property. If the rent-gap is large enough, it will draw investment, improvements, increased rents, and displacement.

## CRITERIA 3

### A PLACE CLEARLY SLATED FOR IMPENDING PUBLIC INVESTMENT

This area of East Portland includes several impending public investments based on the following plans and projects:

- East Portland Action Plan (EPAP)  
*In 2009, the Portland City Council adopted this plan to demand attention and investments in East Portland. This plan is driven by guiding principles of improved livability and involvement of underrepresented communities.*
- Neighborhood Prosperity Initiatives  
*The Portland Development Commission (PDC) leads the Portland Main Street Program which created two Neighborhood Prosperity Initiatives in the pilot area, the Rosewood Initiative along SE Stark and the Division-Midway Alliance along SE Division corridor. These areas are targeted for ongoing investment and development by PDC.*
- 2035 Comprehensive Plan  
*The City of Portland's Urban Design Framework identifies centers and corridors as sites of investment to prepare for future growth. The area around SE 122nd, SE 162nd, and the stretch of SE Division between these two are identified as a town center, a neighborhood center, and a civic corridor, respectively. All of this means new development at these sites within the next 20 years.*
- Metro's Powell-Division Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)  
*A bus rapid transit project is being planned along SE Division to offer more regular bus service at faster speeds. The project will run from Gresham to downtown Portland and could begin running as early as 2020. The project aims to be an equitable transit-oriented development that will reduce existing disparities and prevent people from being displaced.*

Given the guiding principles and neighborhood-serving, equity focus of each of the aforementioned plans and projects, partnering with these groups could raise the visibility of needs specific to Africans and African Americans in East Portland.



## CONCLUSION

Based on demographic trends and planned growth in East Portland, it is time to take action to re-root and stabilize this community. This type of action can help to recover the community and safeguard against future displacement. Chapter 2 describes the process that the student team engaged in with the African and African American community in East Portland to start this conversation and to contribute to the greater PAALF People's Plan effort.

# 2

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



## MY STORY

“My dad was straight-up traditional and my mom was from East coast...My dad was in the guerilla war when he was 9 in Africa, growing up with stories he used to tell me...it did make me feel different. I wasn't the average Black kid.”

## MY CHALLENGE

“I have a mental health disorder. Many people don't know that you can get over mental challenges with wellness, not always taking medications...I'm in mental health because I'm trying to inspire kids that it doesn't matter who you are, we all have some type of mental health challenges. We just tend to need help while others can cope.”

“People had different terms...it became, Adjoa you're African African American. I had to educate myself, why Blacks separate themselves from African Americans...”

## MY DREAM

“I want to see African food and across the street Dirty South Soul Food. I wanna go to a club and see poetry from both sides of the story [African and African American] Portland puts Black people separate.If we was all together, we fight as a team... there's no African American backbone because that's how they want it to be. I don't want that. I want us to be a family...”

# JUJU

# ASSUMAN

Age: 22

## A Youth Mentor

## A Mental Health Advocate

## A Leader

---

Juju started a neighborhood youth wellness program, is active in multiple mental health organizations, and in the process of creating a space for a PDX multicultural youth program

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The foundation of the East Portland Pilot Plan is to engage East Portland’s African and African American community and enable capacity building of emerging community leaders.

Given the focus on the African and African American community and the specific social context of working with displaced communities, we sought a culturally competent approach to recognizing individual and cultural differences in perspective and meaning. We also sought a process where the African and African American community leaders had a role of real power in the workshops and forums.

The goal of this community engagement strategy was to collaborate with the African and African American community in East Portland in identifying issues, generating solutions and getting reactions to recommendations and proposed direction. The message we hoped to convey to the community was that we would work with them to ensure that their concerns and issues were directly reflected in the recommendations [1]. We also wanted to show how East Portland participants influenced the decisions we made as a student team.

Ultimately we hope that this public engagement process will lay the foundation for sustained community action by Black leaders to address African and African American issues in East Portland.

This chapter conveys the activities used to engage community members in East Portland and details the specific community engagement events we had over the process of this pilot plan. It also recognizes that this was not a perfect process and outlines what we learned after each event and how the community engagement strategy evolved along the way [2].

[1] City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative. Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide.

[2] Both Appendix II and the associated Community Engagement Plan Report provided more detail about this process and rationale for student team decisions.

Seven principles of placemaking were applied in the East Portland Pilot Plan.

PRINCIPLE OF PLACEMAKING	EAST PORTLAND PILOT PLAN ACTIVITY
1. Start with community assets and emphasize diversity;	Asset Mapping
2. Leverage place-based potential, skills, and culture. The community is the expert;	Community Leaders Forums Public Workshops
3. Make a place not a design;	Reflection of visions, goals, strategies and actions shared by pilot participants in Chapter 3
4. Building a vision is just as important as building a place;	Community Leaders Forums
5. Integrate storytelling with placemaking;	Story Corner
6. Involve partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors; and	Stakeholder/Key Informant Interviews Networking at Community Events Canvassing Phonebanking
7. Start with small gains but think long-term.	Proposal of short, medium and long-term actions in Chapters 3 and 4

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Aligned with our goal to enable capacity building and collaborate with the African and African American community in East Portland we envisioned a process led by community leaders. The idea was to establish a group of at least five advisors to act as mentors to the community leaders throughout the process. Despite the limited capacity that exists in East Portland, we recognized the benefit of engaging seasoned leaders from outside of East Portland to serve as mentors and as a connection to more organized African American advocacy in North/Northeast Portland. The advisory committee would help us to identify community leaders by the first community leaders forum.

We proposed a series of three community leaders forums with a public workshop between each forum that community leaders would co-lead with a member of the student team (Figure 1). This co-leadership model led by representatives from the local Black community we hoped would result in more candid discussion of issues than could be gained if the process was solely led and managed by non-Black student team members. We believed that this would be the best way to build capacity and local ownership of the plan.

The ultimate outcome of the process would be a strategic roadmap with short-, medium- and long-term strategies to address specific issues faced by the African and African American community in East Portland.

Figure 1: Community Engagement Strategy



## IDENTIFICATION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Concurrent with creating a plan for community engagement events, our student team began a process to identify individuals to serve as advisors and community leaders. We sought to balance both groups as much as possible with men and women; youth, middle-aged persons and seniors; African Americans and African immigrants and refugees; higher, middle, and lower income earners; and residents, workers, business owners, faith representatives, and landowners. We aimed to find at least five individuals for the advisory committee and community leaders group who could commit to actively and meaningfully participating in the proposed forums and workshops.

While we achieved early success in identifying advisors through a list of organizations and discussions with our PAALF client contact, we quickly realized the significant challenge in finding local community leaders with the capacity to participate. In response, we became more intentional in seeking these individuals through recommendations by the advisory committee members and agency representatives working on other projects in East Portland, as well as going directly to the East Portland community through canvassing.



*Mix of student team members, advisory committee members, and community leaders at Community Leaders Forum #1*

## GOALS

- Generate a list of assets and issues in East Portland;
- Establish connections among community leaders, Advisory Council and PAALF consultants; and
- Introduce leaders and advisors to the PAALF People’s Plan and the East Portland Pilot Plan.

## COMMUNITY LEADERS FORUM #1

We planned Community Leaders Forum #1 with 30-minutes of meeting, mingling and eating, followed by personal introductions, presentations from our client and student team of the PAALF People’s Plan and background findings and discussion of the East Portland Pilot Plan. We prepared and presented boards highlighting our findings and had large aerial maps with on-the-ground images for context and reference.



*Initial set-up by student team*



*Adapted set-up around dinner table*

## IN ACTION

While the student team planned the meeting to consist of small group discussion at two separate tables with a report-back near the end of the meeting, the conversation began and ended with everyone in one large group near the food and around a festive, dinner table-like setting. The student team relocated maps, boards and notepads to this area. The discussion was active and engaging and established a solid foundation for future meetings to build upon.

We found that many of the emerging leaders we had expected were not able to participate in the process. Because the community leaders structure did not look like it would happen as envisioned, our student team established a

potential contingency plan to be implemented before the second public meeting if we did not get enough community input from the original structure. Details about the contingency plan can be found in Appendix II.

We decided that since we were unable to establish a group of African and African American leaders to facilitate the first Public Workshop, we would minimize the involvement of four of our White team members. We hoped that this would reduce barriers to effective engagement. We knew that, as a team, we had to be as conscious as possible to build comfort, confidence and trust amongst participants.

Monday, March 23rd  
5:30-8pm  
Rosewood Initiative



## GOALS

- To introduce members of the public to the PAALF People’s Plan, specifically the EPPP;
- To tap into and incorporate the expertise of members of the public; and
- To develop a shared vision and generate excitement for East Portland.

Public  
Workshop  
#1

## PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1

This workshop was meant to be a larger, public version of the first Community Leaders Meeting aimed at identifying assets and issues in East Portland. We created a series of stations for people to progress through before reaching the food area. They included a check-in station with background information, a map table, and a story corner. At the map table we asked attendees to review and add to the assets and challenges. The story corner was set up for our client and student team members to interview attendees willing to share their personal experience of being African or African American in East Portland.

We opened by playing the ‘Future Portland’ video (Brushfire Creative Partners and Ifanyi Bell). Then we launched into a ‘People Bingo’ icebreaker event to encourage people to meet and connect with each other. We then asked participants to spread out amongst two tables and co-generated a list of meeting rules before small groups, guided by a facilitator and notetaker, discussed assets and issues related to the pilot area.



*Group separated into two small groups to discuss assets and issues*

## IN ACTION

Despite careful time management, the student team did not have time to get through their proposed agenda to develop a working definition of ‘community’ and a collective vision for East Portland’s Black community. We learned that African and African American community members in East Portland need

time and space for dialogue due to the lack of specific organizational attention to Africans and African Americans in East Portland to date. We also learned that our initial emphasis on the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project seemed increasingly less significant than other issue areas.

Community Leaders Forum #2

GOALS

- Identify top four issues;
- Develop solutions for each of the four issues; and
- Provide opportunities for leaders to continue to be involved.

COMMUNITY LEADERS FORUM #2

In preparation for this meeting, we compiled the top assets and challenges identified by participants at the first two events and listed them on large notepads for participants to see. To better understand them, the student team categorized them into the larger PAALF People’s Plan “buckets” (e.g. health). We then ranked the bucket based on how often each asset and challenge was previously discussed. The ranked issues included: access to transit services; local economic development; youth activities, services and employment; sense of place; buildings connections to power; poverty; housing; safety; culturally appropriate services; building the African American community; and creating African American empowerment. The plan was to have participants vote on their top concerns and separate into small groups for more in-depth discussion on the topic and to start generating solutions.



Sharing a meal and discussing vision for East Portland

IN ACTION

The top five issues that participants identified were: access to transit; local economic development; youth activities; services and employment; and building connections to power.

Based on robust discussion and the trust that seemed to be forming within this group of participants, our student team determined this meeting to be a success and that moving to the

contingency plan formerly discussed, would not be necessary. By this point our definition of Community Leaders was anyone who had active interest in PAALF People’s Plan and the East Portland Pilot Plan specifically. The primary focus moving forward would be to continuing to meaningfully engage the cohort of participants that had been regularly attending forums and workshops.

Thursday, April 2nd  
 5:30-8pm  
 PCC SE Campus, Tabor Hall 148

**GOALS**

- To reflect back findings and analysis of community workshops thus far;
- To present initial recommendations and discuss more concrete actions; and
- To solidify a core group of volunteers interested in representing East Portland within broader People's Plan.

Public  
Workshop  
#2

**PUBLIC WORKSHOP #2**

In our early planning, we envisioned this workshop as a celebration of the work completed. While still seeking to maintain some celebratory aspect, the student team sought to focus on action items and moving the project beyond our involvement. With the go-ahead from our client we began identifying potential action items in response to findings from our discussions with community leaders about issues and solutions. We planned to reflect back our findings and analysis before presenting draft recommendations for the following ranked areas: sense of place, economic development, youth, health, and transportation.



*Community leaders discussing sense of place in East Portland*

**IN ACTION**

The agenda never progressed beyond the first issue: sense of place. This was partly because we had new participants joining us that included a representative from PAALF and a recent graduate from the PAALF Leadership Academy whose cohort proposed the People's Plan as a PAALF project. We had other first-time participants from a phonebanking effort to involve

survey respondents from PAALF's Gentrification Survey. New and returning participants engaged in great discussion and our team intentionally stood back to allow room for the conversation to build. By the end of this workshop, we had at least five committed volunteers who were intent on moving momentum forward on a plan for the Black community in East Portland.

Community Leaders Forum #3

GOALS

- Assess participant interest in continuing involvement to implement the plan; and
- Support and assist Community Leaders Forum with identifying resources for sustained action

# COMMUNITY LEADERS FORUM #3

Initially our student team envisioned this last forum as an opportunity to strategize next steps with the community and lay the foundation for sustained community action and implementation. We hoped that we would be able to identify short, medium and long term action items and goals with participants and we planned to support community leaders with resources to implement the plan (trainings, partnerships, funding, etc.)



*Community leaders engaged in discussion about next steps*

## IN ACTION

At the end of Public Workshop #2, community leaders scheduled and organized the last Community Leaders Forum. Recognizing that the community had started to take ownership of this plan, only two representatives from the student team attended the forum with our PAALF client. The focus of the meeting was to discuss the types of activities community leaders wanted to do

moving forward. The student team provided support with planning an agenda and getting a space to meet. As a team, many of us have agreed to act as a resource for continued discussion about implementation and next steps for PAALF People's Plan as our formal involvement with the East Portland Pilot Plan ends in June.

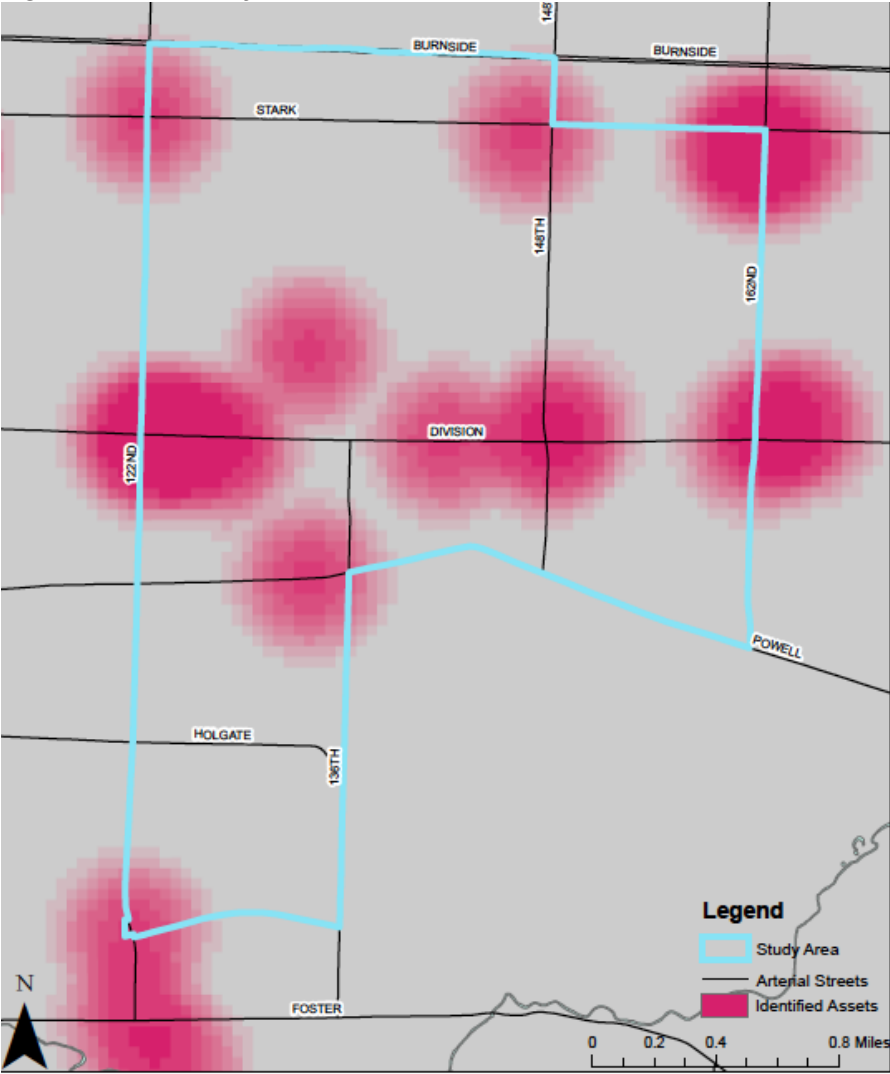
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Thursday, May 14th  
 6-8pm  
 Multnomah County Library Midland Branch

# ASSET MAP FINDINGS

The map below identifies the assets that came up most during Community Leaders Meeting #1 and Public Workshop #1. This map can be used to figure out where “placemaking” activities should take place because if the community already likes a place the addition of, for example, public art investment, might make it even better. Additionally, the presence of a lot of popular businesses and other assets might be a sign of an emerging business district.

Figure 2: Community Asset Heatmap



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## ASSETS IDENTIFIED BY THE COMMUNITY

### ROSEWOOD & INCOMING BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

Located on either side of SE 162nd, the Rosewood Initiative and incoming Boys and Girls club were discussed often during public engagement activities, especially the impact that they might have on the youth in East Portland. Rosewood Initiative is a growing, ambitious Neighborhood Prosperity Initiative which meets many community needs, including providing a space for youth to spend time after school. Meanwhile, Boys and Girls Club will bring capacity and an established brand once it opens its doors. Either establishment could become a community center for far East Portland, a need given the distance from the next closest official community center (East Portland Community Center, located 2.9 miles away). More importantly, the two might be able to coexist and take advantage of their closeness by working off of each other and their respective strengths.

### ROSS, REGAL CINEMAS & FUTURE BUS RAPID TRANSIT STOP

Located either on or directly to the northeast of the intersection of SE 162nd and Division Street. Ross was discussed in the first public engagement meeting while Regal Cinemas was identified as an asset by David Douglas High School students. The students especially appreciated the “five dollar Tuesday” promotion at the cinema, one of the few activities they discussed as an asset in East Portland. Like the intersection of SE 122nd and Division St. above, this spot has potential given its combination of future access by rapid transit and already popular businesses.

### ZENGER FARMS & LEACH BOTANICAL GARDENS

These two assets are located close to the intersection of SE Foster and SE 122nd and provide two natural areas that residents can take advantage of. They were only identified in the first community leaders forum and were named one after the other. While both of these assets lie outside of the project boundaries, they are so close and so significant that one can see why they could be considered assets to the community within the boundaries defined by the pilot team. It is also interesting to note that these assets were identified by seasoned leaders and indicates that not many people know about or use these natural areas.

## DIVISION-MIDWAY, MULTNOMAH COUNTY, FAMILY PLANNING, BUS RAPID TRANSIT STOP, HALAL MARKETS & TACO BELL

All of these assets are located either on or close to the intersection of SE 122nd and Division. The Taco Bell was identified during public outreach to David Douglas High School (DDHS) students as a place they spend time after school. The two halal markets located along SE Division were also identified by DDHS students as places they spend time shopping with family. Meanwhile, Division-Midway was discussed during a general discussion of assets within the community because of their potential to assist with business development on the west side of the project area. Multnomah County Health Services was discussed during the same meeting as Division-Midway because of their capacity to help those with limited income access health care.

Finally, the future BRT stop was discussed during numerous meetings and was referred to as an asset for its potential to provide better access to transit and potential station-area investments related to the construction of the BRT project. This is a particularly “hot” part of the map because of all of the assets and their physical closeness. This spot combines businesses with services and access, all of which make each other better because of their closeness. For example, those that need a medical examination at the County clinic will experience shorter travel times thanks to the BRT stop and they might also do some shopping while they are there.

## CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY THE COMMUNITY

In much the same way that the student team sought geographically specific assets, geographically specific challenges were discussed as well. East Portland participants identified 22 challenges that they had to live with in their section of East Portland but virtually none of them could be defined as a single point on a map, rather, they were discussed as a community-wide challenge. Some highlights of these discussions are outlined on the next pages.

## SAFETY ISSUES

Many participants discussed the need for greater safety along the MAX lines (both Burnside's Blue Line and the I-205 adjacent Green Line). One resident commented that when she called 911 from a MAX platform to report a suspicious individual she could not hear the operator over the music being played on the platform. Other participants reported that they felt unsafe at MAX stations, especially at night. A lack of black police officers in East Portland was discussed as something citizens felt unsafe about because of the lack of cultural understanding expressed by most Portland Police officers. Other participants talked about lack of relationship-building by police officers that limits trust-building

## TRANSIT ACCESS

Transit dependant participants gave voice to many major challenges of living in East Portland. One of which was a lack of transit access to supermarkets. While there are two supermarkets in the study area (Fred Meyer on SE 148th and Division St. and Safeway on SE 122nd and Powell Blvd.) transit dependant participants reported that they either took the MAX to the Gateway Fred Meyer (NE 102nd and Glisan) or the number 15 bus to the Burnside QFC (E Burnside and 55th). Both of the latter supermarkets are much further west than residents might otherwise travel but they represent a more convenient option for those living closer to Burnside because of the lack of north-south transit lines in East Portland; another commonly discussed challenge.

North-south lines travel along 122nd and 181st but nowhere in between, a distance of 2.9 miles. For some, this means traveling further for groceries, for others it means long walks to the north-south bus necessary for access to a job. During the second community leaders meeting, a small group discussed and identified SE 148th as a good location for a north-south line that could connect both to the N/NE community and down to jobs in Clackamas.

## ACCESS TO SERVICES

East Portland participants discussed their concerns regarding lack of services in East Portland in many ways and during numerous meetings. Youth-related services were a common desire among participants. The lack of after school activities was discussed as a contributing factor



to crimes committed by youth. Meanwhile, some participants expressed frustration that there were no job training programs to introduce young people to trades and future skilled job opportunities. Other participants spoke to the challenge of accessing culturally specific mental health services. Unlike services provided in North and Northeast Portland, mental health service providers in East Portland struggle to properly assist African American patients. On the eastern boundary of the pilot area (approximately 162nd Ave.) access to services is complicated by the border between Gresham and Portland. Residents reported that service providers often declined to assist in crisis situations because they claim that the incident in question is outside of their service boundaries.

## DISINVESTMENT

Many participants felt as though their area lacked much in the way of investment from either residents or employers. Some discussed the lack of major employment opportunities in East Portland, while others commented on the “dirty” nature of major streets. A good deal of the discussion around economic development focused on creating small spaces for businesses to operate because many believed there was not enough business space. It should be noted that many participants discussed disinvestment as an opportunity because empty buildings and low land values allows creative reuse and low cost of doing business.

## KEY FINDINGS FROM THE COMMUNITY

Given that none of the members of the student team could identify with the experience of being Black in Portland, the research method known as phenomenology was used to determine findings and recommendations. This method because it corrects for individual and cultural differences in perspective and meaning. Phenomenology is not solely concerned with what we experience, feel or think, but *how* we experience it and how subjective experiences are driving forces in the human experience.

Each team member spent time in self reflection, honestly taking account of his/her previous experiences and any preconceived notions they carried with them regarding race and equity, specifically in reference to the Black community in Portland. This practice was meant to protect against misinterpreting input shared by African and African American community members. A more detailed account of the methodology used can be found in Appendix III.

## ROOT SHOCK

The primary manifestation of root shock expressed among East Portland participants comes from the disorganization of what was once a cohesive community. Community members expressed loneliness, isolation and concern that their needs could more easily be ignored because of the loss of organization. Additionally, as gentrification in North and Northeast (N/NE) Portland dismantled social fabric, community institutions have yet to follow displaced residents to East Portland. As a result, many of them continue to travel back and forth to access the familiar stores, services and cultural establishments that still survive. The fact that N/NE Portland remains an important destination and point of reference for participants suggests that East Portland does not nurture the needs of the Black community. Finally, community members lamented the dismantling of African and African American N/NE Portland because of the cultural and social significance of the place itself. Without the local examples of successful Black homeownership, businesses and neighborhoods, participants wondered how they could inspire future generations in East Portland. These findings suggest that community members are seeking a stronger sense of place, a stronger sense of community, and a way to better meet their basic needs in East Portland.

## DRIVING FORCES AND THE BLACK EAST PORTLAND EXPERIENCE

**Organizational Capacity:** Regarding the lack of any sense of Black community within East Portland, participants demonstrated confidence in their capability to address this challenge. Many anticipated how difficult the task would be, however they exchanged various ideas and strategies for bringing people together. Some of these included bringing food to people's doors, posting flyers and organizing events to inform residents about existing resources and places for gathering and supporting causes important to the Black community in East Portland.

**Policy and Planning Forces:** The presence of Policy and Planning Forces as a driving force was often inferred by the student team because so many of the problems or aspirations discussed by East Portland participants could be addressed through better policy. Many issues linked to policy and planning forces were about transit access. Another topic entirely was the general land use patterns found in East Portland. Participants identified the spread out

nature of East Portland as a hindrance to their life because it is difficult and unpleasant to walk. Additionally, they expressed frustration with apartments concentrated along major streets. This, some stated, creates a clear delineation between upper middle class homeowners and economically challenged apartment dwellers.

**Discrimination and Racism:** These forces came up explicitly related to specific topics. For example, the topic of TriMet's implementation of the efare system made many participants feel as though the transit agency was going to disadvantage the African and African American population by making cash fares less feasible. This made participants feel as though TriMet did not care about the impacts on the community. Additional issues which brought up concerns of systemic or interpersonal racism included the treatment of African immigrants with suspicion. Their experiences suggested that they were treated as other by White Portlanders and made to feel unequal, or not welcome.

**Market Forces:** Like Planning and Policy Forces, market forces were inferred by the student team. Market forces were found to be linked to transit issues, as well as employment and housing opportunity. The desire for a north-south bus was linked to market forces because discussion with participants revealed that there is a high demand for this service. Additionally, a north-south line would improve access to good paying jobs, a connection which would alter the nature of East Portland economics. The other issue most associated with market forces was the topic of displacement, which participants linked to the rising rents that drove some of them from their homes. In this case, the market was not properly regulated to prevent the devastation of a community.

**Historical Forces:** East Portland participants worried that without the example of Black society and all of the history and struggle it took to establish N/NE Portland, it would be hard for future generations to feel as though they could have a stake in Portland. Historical forces were also associated with the experience of root shock and the trauma associated with generations of displacement.

## WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Like any good plan, before presenting recommendations, we must look back at the important factors that shaped our process.

### TIME

Project scoping, background research, community engagement, analysis and reporting all happened within a five month timeline. Because of constraints with time, the student team set the agenda and prompted discussions with community members throughout the planning process. For example, the topics of youth and transportation were the most extensive discussions. This was a result of the student team prompting community members to choose a few topics, out of many, to explore more deeply together because of limited time. As a result, there are important topics and issue areas that we were not able to address within the pilot plan timeline. Those include, housing and safety and security.

### PARTICIPATION

Throughout the pilot planning process, the student team successfully engaged 33 participants. There was an average of nine participants at community workshops and forums. Because of relatively low participation, the views, discussions, and results of this planning process may not be representative of the entire community in East Portland. Further community engagement is needed in order to test the validity of findings presented in this report.

### REPRESENTATION

A majority of participants identified as African American, with limited representation from African immigrant and refugee communities. Additionally, there was stronger participation in the community workshops from women. A range of age groups were represented throughout the planning process, from high school youth to middle-aged community members, as well as seniors. There was almost no representation from business owners and entrepreneurs and engagement of these community members will be important in East Portland. Additionally, many of our participants do not actually live within the boundaries of the pilot area, however they identified strongly with the area due to other factors, such as work, school, former resident, or other community amenities that they regularly access in the area.

Overall, the makeup of the group at any of our community workshops strongly influenced the direction of discussion. For example, community members steered away from the topic of housing. This may be due to conflicting concerns that they felt more strongly about at the time. Housing, however, may be an important issue for those not present.

## METHODS

A central feature of the planning process involved a series of community workshops, as well as key informant interviews and storytelling. The information gathered from these methods involved transcribing, coding, and qualitative analysis, which were time intensive activities. Through these methods, however, the student team is able to present a vivid portrait of the experiences, views, and issues most important to community members in this process. Limited time, however, also meant that the student team was not able to apply other methods to supplement the findings in this plan. Other methods we considered incorporating include additional focus groups at churches or African community groups, a walking tour, a community survey, and photovoice [1]. More information about our student team's methods can be found in Appendix III.

## COMMUNITY CONDITIONS

The fragmentation and isolation of community members, a symptom of root shock, presented a major challenge for the student team. Additionally, a lack of organizational capacity and community gathering spaces for Africans and African Americans contributed to these conditions. These factors also help explain low participation numbers during the planning process. For participants at community workshops, however, it was clear to the student team that the space and time together was valuable. Community workshops transformed into opportunities to reflect on the past, share stories, build mutual understanding, and connect over shared hopes and dreams for their future in East Portland.

## CONCLUSION

While these factors have shaped the planning process, it is important to remember that this is a snapshot of what community members are currently experiencing in East Portland. Therefore, this is just the beginning of a recovery and (re)building process and the recommendations presented in Chapter 3 offer a roadmap into the future.

[1] University of Kansas Work Group for Community Health and Development. (2014). Chapter 3: Assessing community needs and resources, Section 20: Implementing photovoice in your community. Retrieved from <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/photovoice/main>

# 3

## STRATEGIC ROADMAP



## MY STORY

"I was born in Mississippi. My parents came in the 40s to work in the shipyards. My dad wanted to get away from the projects after the flood. He bought a house after the law passed that Blacks could own homes. My mom worked because my dad couldn't afford things I needed. 'Well if you can't give 'em to her then I'm goin' to work.' My brother was Fred Meyers very first clerk. NAACP was picketing. He applied. I'm proud of my family. I worked at Pac Bell, video conferencing. I was the first. They were embarrassed because they didn't want a woman showing 'em how to work the equipment. That was my favorite job."

## MY CHALLENGE

"I wanted to stay in my neighborhood, but were full. I tried 6 [senior living homes]. I was surprised and distressed senior livin' was full. Now what, move into another rental place? I ended up at Parkview. I have friends out here, but never tried to find them."

## MY DREAM

"We need to change the way people look at us. I would love to see any kind of black-owned businesses. I don't see that here. [A vibrant community is] going down the street and there are homes, kids in the street playin' ball. Just people out, sitting on their porch, holding a conversation.

It doesn't have to be totally Afro American, I like a mixed neighborhood, but it needs to be comfortable where you can see people that look like you."

# DORIS STEVENSON

Age: 74

A Debutante  
A Conference Planner  
A Trailblazer

---

Doris is on Urban League's Senior Advisory Committee and is a Worship in Pink ambassador, where congregations of all faiths help raise awareness about breast cancer. Doris is also a Telecom Pioneer, the world's largest group of industry-specific employees and retirees dedicated to community service.

"This area is so different. We're all separated. Just learning the area. I just found Urban League out here. It's only open on Tuesday. I can't get there. To tell somebody where to get help, I tell them go to NE."

# A STRATEGIC ROADMAP TO A THRIVING & VIBRANT BLACK COMMUNITY IN EAST PORTLAND

The East Portland Pilot Plan presents a series of recommendations to support the work of the Portland African American Leadership Forum (PAALF), its partners, and the residents in East Portland. These recommendations strive to achieve the overarching goal of helping the Black community in East Portland to (re)connect with one another, build capacity, and strive toward community self-determination. Some recommendations were developed in direct response to the stories shared by pilot participants, while others were developed by the team to align community needs with anticipated development in East Portland. These recommendations are presented as suggestions for incorporating into the PAALF People's Plan.

The planning process yielded rich discussion on a wide range of topics. This chapter reflects back visions, goals, strategies, and actions for the key thematic areas identified by participants:

- 3.1 Sense of Place
- 3.2 Mobility
- 3.3 Youth
- 3.4 Economic Development

The team also proposes a framework for sorting the strategies and actions on a timeline of short-, medium-, and long term projects. Criteria were identified to help guide which strategies and actions might be prioritized over others. These are not meant to be prescriptive, however they originate from community engagement findings and include practical considerations of the overall potential and impact of a strategy or action. The prioritization criteria are explained on the following page.



- Allows for the (re)construction of social capital and cultural fabric: Social fragmentation and isolation were found to be barriers hindering the formation of a sense of community. If an action can help build community connections, it provides a foundation that other recommendations can build upon.
- Provides an opportunity to build organizational capacity: Organizational capacity was found to be low among Africans and African Americans in East Portland. If an action can help build organizational capacity, it provides a foundation that other recommendations can build upon.
- Valued by community members based on the planning process: If a recommendation was an important issue from our data analysis, it is considered valuable (see Appendix III). Focusing initial work on the most valued issues may help to increase community interest and investment in the planning process.
- Potential funding available to support implementation: As a practical consideration, if existing or potential resources are available this may help determine if an action can be implemented now, or further down the road.
- Feasibility for the implementer: This criteria considers the current political climate, competing priorities, as well as the capacity of identified stakeholders for each recommendation.
- Aligns with existing and upcoming planning and policy developments in East Portland: If a recommendation has the potential to be linked to improvement efforts led by public agencies, it presents an opportunity for securing benefits for the community and advocating for accountable development.

A summary table at the end of each thematic area includes information about suggested timelines. For more detailed information about prioritization methodology, please see Appendix IV.

In this chapter we try our best to address the issues raised by project participants. Ultimately, we hope these recommendations offer some clear avenues for community healing and manifesting racial and spatial justice in our city.

# SENSE OF PLACE



## MY STORY

"I met my birth mom twice. She was in jail when she had me. I'm originally from Knoxville, TN. Got into drug addiction... but through my church, I was able to move to TX where I really rebuilt my life. Came across PSU. I knew where PDX was going w/ith poverty being pushed to the edges. I also knew the history and legacy of planning. What better place to learn?"

## MY CHALLENGE

"My earliest memories are at 2, being ripped away from my parents in court... I lived the rest of my life unknowingly that no one loved me. I would always be abandoned. Caused my path to drug addiction, to deal with things that I didn't quite know how to deal with... But then attending church, people just walking with me, willing to be like yeah you kinda screwed up, but willing to stand by my side...I'm not abandonment, I'm actually sought out. That's been the foundation for why I do the work I do. I want people to know, you're not alone. There are people who believe in you, hear you, help you live out your dreams."

# TONY LAMB

Age: 30

## An AmeriCorps Grad A Christian A Movement Builder

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Tony is the Director of Economic Development at The Rosewood Initiative and a part-time Community Development student at Portland State University.

## MY DREAM

"East Portland would be developed and designed by Black PDX and not imposed. For people to choose themselves how it looks, how it plays out. People would thrive, in leadership positions and opportunities... Businesses and faith communities that support Black Portland. People would feel like it's their community, not just where you sleep or where you're forced to be."

# SENSE OF PLACE

## EAST PORTLAND IS A PLACE WHERE AFRICANS AND AFRICAN AMERICANS LIVE IN A THRIVING, VISIBLE, VIBRANT AND IDENTIFIABLE BLACK COMMUNITY.

A common sentiment from project participants was that the city has forgotten about Africans and African Americans in East Portland. Despite recent efforts by the public sector to improve economic health and livability in the area, project participants pointed to certain needs that remain unaddressed. For example, there are relatively few gathering places in East Portland, as well as limited celebration of an East Portland identity. While the contributions of Africans and African Americans are well known and memorialized in the historic neighborhoods of N/NE Portland, there is little acknowledgement of the contributions of this community in East Portland. Because of these factors, opportunities to connect with one another and (re)build community in the area are limited.

Furthermore, a lack of gathering places, community identity, and celebration may act as barriers to developing a positive relationship with place. The process of placemaking, however enables residents to participate in the planning of places where they live, work, and play. If residents who have been historically marginalized and directly impacted by urban development are at the center of this process, placemaking can be a transformative intervention that can promote attachment to place and bring about racial and spatial justice in East Portland.

Therefore, in response to the needs identified by participants, the team recommends the following set of goals:

**Goal SP1:** Address issues of ‘root shock’ experienced by Africans and African Americans who formerly lived in North or Inner Northeast Portland

**Goal SP2:** Raise the visibility of Africans and African Americans in East Portland

**Goal SP3:** Promote African and African American-oriented places and districts

**Goal SP4:** Increase Black community organizational capacity in East Portland

The following section offers more concrete strategies and actions to meet these goals.

## STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

**Goal SP1: Address issues of ‘root shock’ experienced by Africans and African Americans in East Portland who formerly lived in North or Inner Northeast Portland.**

Project participants shared feelings of loss and a desire for (re)building a sense of community in East Portland. Increasing opportunities for community members to interact and collaborate with one another in this environment will be foundational for PAALF People’s Plan moving forward. Some concrete strategies and actions include:

**SP1.1: Partner with advocacy groups like the Urban League of Portland, IRCO/Africa House and African Youth and Community Organization to facilitate neighborhood networking through forums discussing challenges of Africans and African Americans in East Portland.**

*The team connected with several key organizations in East Portland that present beneficial partnership opportunities for PAALF. The Urban League of Portland is currently expanding its reach in East Portland and operating out of the Rosewood Initiative. Additionally, IRCO/Africa House and AYCO have a strong presence in East Portland and can serve as cultural guides for strengthening pan-African solidarity. Collaboration with these partners can help build social capital, increase awareness of local resources, and enhance future community planning efforts. For example, PAALF People’s Plan can coordinate future planning workshops with these organizations to increase reach and continue discussions on health and well-being, safety and security, and housing issues specific to East Portland.*

“What bothers me is when I wanna tell my grandkids about where I grew up, and talk about that... I can’t because the landmark’s not there. When I’m tellin them a story about what we did..they’re looking at me like.. ‘ok grandma, I don’t understand.’ It just cannot believe how things have changed so much in that area.”

**East Portland Participant**

**SP1.2:** Partner with the American Institute of Architects’ Urban Design Panel, the City of Portland, Design+Culture Lab and Portland State University to identify new design ideas for streets and buildings in East Portland that recreate desirable neighborhood gathering spaces from N/NE Portland.

*Several pilot participants noted urban design characteristics of N/NE neighborhoods that help to build social capital and networks, such as home designs with the front porch directly facing the street. East Portland neighborhoods, however generally possess suburban design characteristics such as wider streets, and porches or patios in the back yard. Partnering with local urban design experts may lead to increased participatory design practices and concepts that better address community needs and social issues.*

**Goal SP2: Raise the visibility of Africans and African Americans in East Portland.**

Because community members feel forgotten in this area, visibility may contribute to increasing public awareness of the needs of Black Portlanders in East Portland. This would also help to advance other efforts to advocate around equitable placemaking and future investment in East Portland. Visibility may ultimately help to secure benefits to existing residents and improve community resilience.

**SP2.1:** Partner with EPAP, the Urban League of Portland and organizers of local festivals like Good in the Neighborhood to host African and African American-specific cultural events, arts exhibits and festivals.

*One way to elevate the visibility of this community in East Portland is through the organization of events. Pilot participants want to see more celebration of African and African American history and culture. They identified family friendly examples found in N/NE such as Good in the Hood, as well as the Juneteenth Festival. In addition to these type of events, arts exhibits can be another avenue for sparking community dialogue on important social issues affecting Black folks. A recent art exhibit in Los Angeles called Manifest Justice raised visibility of a South LA, local issues, and drew large crowds to an often forgotten part of town.*

“You look at north, northeast Portland, older neighborhoods. They have a front porch. You get out here to suburbia and they have a deck in the back of the house. So that tells me something. A lot of the people out here are to themselves...”

**East Portland Participant**

**SP2.2: Partner with the City of Portland and Portland’s elected officials to identify opportunities of renaming key streets, parks and other public entities in East Portland to people and places relevant to Africans and African Americans.**

*Rosa Parks Parkway and Cesar Chavez Boulevard are two recent examples of local streets that were renamed to honor important figures in history. Further assessment is needed to see if any campaigns exist in East Portland. The process to rename streets in the city has been met with controversy in the past. As the area receives public improvements into the future, however, there may be opportunities in the naming of new public amenities. The Tilikum Crossing is a recent example of a public process led by Trimet to name Portland’s newest bridge.*

**SP2.3: Partner with PDC, the Regional Arts & Culture Council and the Pacific Northwest College of Art to implement a mural program focused on visually improving commercial building walls in major corridors utilizing local Black artists.**

*Mural programs have been used in cities across the country to revitalize disinvested neighborhoods. Community-based mural programs can help local residents portray their history and celebrate their culture. It also enables a community to reclaim public spaces for social gatherings. It can also be an avenue through which communities can heal from past trauma and be inspired by messages of hope. For example, in Oakland, the Community Rejuvenation Project was recently engaged in a mural project that signified and represented the Pan-African and multicultural identity of a neighborhood.*

**SP2.4: Partner with TriMet, the Regional Arts & Culture Council and the Pacific Northwest College of Art to implement an art program that pairs aspiring artists with professional artists from East Portland’s African and African American community to create temporary interactive exhibits at East Portland MAX stations and high-use bus stops.**

*Creating temporary exhibits may be an effective strategy for introducing public art in East Portland, where public art is limited. Coupling this with the training of emerging artists can also build their capacity in the public art process. Advocating for representation of African and African American artists and stories in temporary art projects in East Portland can help develop a sense of pride and ownership of public spaces in the area, while at the same time signifying a vibrant community presence.*

### **Goal SP3: Promote African and African American-oriented places and districts.**

Project participants expressed strong desires to see more Black-owned businesses in East Portland. In conjunction with frequent comments about wanting to connect with each other in public spaces, the team recommends establishing African and African American-oriented places and districts. Black-owned establishments can serve as gathering places, which are currently limited in East Portland. The results from our community asset mapping exercise with participants also suggests some opportunity sites, however further assessment and research is needed, particularly with African and African American business owners and emerging entrepreneurs in the area.

**SP3.1: Partner with East Portland neighborhood and business associations, EPAP, Venture Portland and elected officials on developing a workshop aimed at generating ideas for a corridor or district of Black-owned and oriented businesses in East Portland.**

*‘Charrette’ workshops are commonly used by urban planning practitioners for visioning and brainstorming with community members. These type of workshops have guided visioning processes for the Portland Mercado and Jade District, which are two local examples of community-led efforts to create places that celebrate cultural heritage and attract diverse visitors through art, entertainment, food, shopping and services. PAALF may also consider working with Portland State University MURP Workshop in the future to implement this recommendation.*

“Before we have to figure out what to build here so that the identity, relational, spatial things have a space to happen...I think we have to choose a road or a couple of roads to start building an identity on so that it is attractive to Black to come, start investing and say ‘let me stop in the barber shop real quick’ start making connections.”

**East Portland Participant**



**SP3.2: Partner with EPAP, the Urban League of Portland, IRCO/Africa House, the City of Portland to assess the feasibility of an African and African American-specific community center in East Portland.**

*Project participants repeatedly expressed the desire for a community center to serve African and African American residents in East Portland. Self-Enhancement Inc. is an example of the type of community center they would like to see in East Portland. As a first step toward a community center, the team recommends a feasibility study to assess site availability, explore funding partnerships, as well as identify an organization to lead in the programming and operations of the center. A promising starting point may also be the Rosewood Initiative, which is already in existence and has plans to expand its operations. Groundwork Portland may also be a potential partner in this effort.*

### **Goal SP4: Increase Black community organizational capacity in East Portland.**

Project participants shared stories of moving and rebuilding their lives in East Portland. They have also expressed that there is little organizing of Africans and African Americans in East Portland. Throughout the planning process, participants shared personal experiences and observations about the social and physical isolation of Africans and African Americans in East Portland. This fragmentation has created barriers for building the social capital and political power needed to effectively advocate for improving livability for Africans and African Americans in East Portland. While the center of Black Portland is still located in the heart of historic N/NE neighborhoods, community members in East Portland may have a set of needs and interests that currently do not align with demanding a right to return or a right to stay, but rather a right to rebuild.

**SP4.1: Develop a PAALF East Portland Committee and/or partner with the Urban League of Portland, IRCO/Africa House and the City of Portland to create an advisory group to regularly inform PAALF on issues affecting Africans and African Americans in East Portland.**

*A valuable outcome of the pilot project was the formation of a core group of individuals who are eager to continue conversations and build toward a better future for Africans and African Americans in East Portland. One of the clearest paths forward to increasing community organizational capacity in East Portland, is to continue collaborating with this core group.*

*Initial discussions have occurred between this core group and PAALF People’s Plan Project Manager. In the short term, this core group may be instrumental in upcoming phases of the People’s Plan. Members of the core group have expressed interest in helping with outreach and event planning in East Portland to bring more residents into the People’s Plan process. In the long term, PAALF may consider institutionalizing an East Portland Committee. This committee could act as a forum for East Portland African and African American residents to discuss, propose, and develop solutions to local issues. The committee can also represent East Portland perspectives in broader policy discussions being led by PAALF.*

“My concern is just that we get together, get on one page, connect so we can have some power to address some of these issues”

**East Portland Participant**

SENSE OF PLACE			
Recommendation	Timeline	Key Stakeholders	
SP1.1	Facilitate neighborhood networking through organizing more forums in East Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, East Portland Participants, Urban League, City of Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement, IRCO/Africa House, AYCO, Rosewood Initiative, EPAP
SP1.2	Develop urban designs to foster community building in East Portland	Long term <i>8+ years</i>	PAALF, Rosewood Initiative, AIA Urban Design Panel, City of Portland BPS, Design+Culture Lab, Portland State University
SP2.1	Organize or host Black cultural events, arts exhibits and festivals in East Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, Urban League, Good in the Hood, Rock the Block
SP2.2	Identify opportunities to rename streets, parks and other public amenities in East Portland	Medium term <i>4 - 7 years</i>	City of Portland PBOT/PP&R, City Council, PDC, TriMet, Organizers from Chavez/Rosa Parks renamings
SP2.3	Implement a mural program to improve commercial building walls in major corridors in East Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	Rosewood Initiative, RACC, PNCA, PDC
SP2.4	Implement an artist program for creating temporary interactive exhibits at East Portland MAX and high-use bus stops	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	TriMet, RACC, PNCA
SP3.1	Develop a workshop for generating ideas for an East Portland Black District	Long term <i>8+ years</i>	PAALF, EPAP, Venture Portland, PDC, Rosewood Initiative, Division-Midway Alliance, IRCO/Africa House, AYCO, Jade District/Soul District/Portland Mercado, Portland State University
SP3.2	Establish a community center specific to serving African and African Americans in East Portland	Long term <i>8+ years</i>	PAALF, EPAP, Urban League, IRCO/Africa House, City of Portland Office of Equity and Human Rights, SEI, Groundwork Portland, Rosewood Initiative
SP4.1	Develop an East Portland Committee, advisory group, or task force to regularly inform PAALF about community issues	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, East Portland Participants, IRCO/Africa House, Urban League

Abbreviations

- AIA American Institute of Architects
- AYCO African Youth and Community Organization
- BPS Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
- EPAP East Portland Action Plan
- IRCO Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization
- PBOT Portland Bureau of Transportation
- PDC Portland Development Commission
- PNCA Pacific Northwest College of Arts
- PP&R Portland Parks and Recreation
- RACC Regional Arts & Culture Council
- SEI Self Enhancement Inc.

# ACCESS AND MOBILITY



## MY STORY

"I'm from Virginia originally. I lived in the Southeast for five years. The community itself is an asset. I live downtown now. I miss it out here. I miss all the people, the kids. I miss hanging out at the community center and seeing everyone. This community has a lot to offer the city as a whole. The people are an untapped resource."

## MY CHALLENGE

"PDX is the first time I ever got called the 'N' word, in the parking lot of Stark & 106th. People tell me 'oh you speak well'. You feel isolated in PDX. Usually you go to work and have to pretend, then back to your neighborhood and feel at home, but not in East PDX."

## MY DREAM

"I'd obviously like to see better transportation, because that's just a lifeline to everything. I'd like to see more black businesses out here...more businesses that cater to us. I've heard somebody talking about hair. I move out here from a place where I had like two hair care salons within walking distance of my apartment. So stuff like that"

# NICOLE PHILIPS

Age: 44

A Singer

A Transit Justice Advocate

A Fearless Force

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Nicole is on Trimet's Transit Equity Advisory Committee and volunteers weekly at Snowcap food bank and service provider in East Portland

# ACCESS AND MOBILITY

**AFRICANS AND AFRICAN AMERICANS HAVE SAFE, EFFICIENT AND AFFORDABLE ACCESS TO JOBS, SHOPPING, AND NEEDED SERVICES THROUGH A VARIETY OF MODES, INCLUDING DRIVING, TRANSIT, WALKING AND BICYCLING.**

Mobility is the ability to travel about freely and easily. We learned about the diverse ways in which participants live their lives after gentrification and displacement have fragmented their communities. What is clear from their stories is that mobility is a lifeline for many who must travel across the city.

Social infrastructure like churches, walkable shopping areas and community centers that serve African and African American residents are lacking. Because of this, many of the participants frequently travel to N/NE neighborhoods in order to access familiar amenities and services, as well as to socialize and attend community events. The public places where people would likely encounter one another, such as MAX stops, were generally associated with filth and crime. Additional research also pointed to longer commutes to work experienced by many people living in East Portland. Finally, the pilot area was observed by participants and the student team to have few good sidewalks and infrequent transit service, making travel by car a necessity and reducing the likelihood that Africans and African Americans will cross paths in East Portland.

In response to the needs identified by participants, the student team recommends the following set of goals:

**Goal AM1:** Increase safety, mobility and accessibility.

**Goal AM2:** Eliminate racial, socioeconomic and spatial inequities in transportation planning decisions.

**Goal AM3:** Improve transit facilities to better ensure comfort and cultural- appropriateness.

The following section offers more concrete strategies and actions to meet these goals.

## STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

### Goal AM1: Increase safety, mobility and accessibility.

Safety refers to improved protection from accidents or collisions, but may also be in reference to criminal activity. Mobility is about improving travel, and reducing barriers for travel. Accessibility is in reference to improving the ability of people with diverse cultural backgrounds and physical ability to use facilities meant for traveling and moving about the city. It may also be about improving the ability of community members to get to desired destinations. All of these areas were identified by participants as concerns in their day to day travel experience and some concrete strategies and steps forward for addressing these issues are listed here.

**AM1.1: Partner with EPAP, City of Portland, TriMet, Oregon state legislators representing East Portland, to fund new and improved sidewalks, lighting and crosswalks near bus stops and MAX stations in East Portland.**

*East Portland State Representative Shemia Fagen was successful in securing a one-time \$1.9 million from the state of Oregon in 2014 to be used for crosswalks in East Portland. Continued advocacy with champions like Rep. Fagen may result in increased funds to improve pedestrian safety, mobility and accessibility.*

**AM1.2: Partner with OPAL and EPAP to advocate for new routes, expanded routes and improved frequencies of existing routes in East Portland whenever TriMet reassesses the area's transit service needs.**

*TriMet regularly reviews its bus routes to better meet community needs. Its Service Enhancement Plan is seeking community input now, with a final version completed in Fall 2015. OPAL has indicated that some East Portland service improvements are being considered in the plan, including new north-south connections within the pilot area. PAALF may consider partnering with OPAL to ensure that service improvements prioritize new north-south connections, which are currently challenging project participants' mobility in East Portland.*

“No Sidewalks (Chuckles). That’s normal.”

**East Portland Participant**

**AM1.3: Partner with the Portland Police Bureau and TriMet to assess the need for classical music played at high-crime, East Portland MAX stations and (if determined to be a crime deterrent) provide mechanisms that allow people to temporarily turn the volume down or off when needing to place a 911 call.**

*Participants complained about the loud music at East Portland MAX stations. This tactic is commonly used in other cities to deter criminal activity. One participant, however, shared a story about a time when she was unable to make a phone call for help when she wanted to report an incident to the police because the music was too loud. Implementers of this action should partner with the Portland Police Bureau and TriMet to assess the need for, and effectiveness of, such crime-deterrent tactics, and to explore potential alternatives that enhance safety at East Portland MAX stations.*



**Goal AM2: Eliminate racial, socioeconomic and spatial inequities in transportation planning decisions.**

Project participants discussed some issues of deep distrust between the African and African American community and TriMet. Fare enforcement, some suggested, was excessive in terms of the amount of the fine. Additionally, some showed concern with the frequency of enforcement actions taking place at MAX stops in more racially diverse areas of the city. Community members also expressed surprise and concern at the upcoming e-fare system. Many worried that less financially secure transit riders often lacked checking accounts or smart phones, tools which will be necessary as TriMet transitions to the e-fare system. Finally, some participants were dissatisfied with the frequency of service on major bus lines in East Portland, while others suggested that north-south service was woefully inadequate in the region. The team compiled the following action items using community input and research.

**AM2.1: Partner with OPAL and EPAP to ensure that TriMet and the City of Portland maintain and increase their awareness of East Portland-specific mobility needs and transportation inequities at transportation-related forums.**

*Through discussions with TriMet and City of Portland, the team found that agencies generally felt uneducated about the transit priorities of African and African American users. In response to this finding, the team recommends that PAALF and partners connect with OPAL and EPAP as potentially strong allies to coordinate advocacy efforts and ensure representation of issues that are important to Africans and African Americans in East Portland.*

**AM2.2: Partner with OPAL and EPAP to advocate that TriMet perform an assessment of the job commute and general transit needs of Africans and African Americans in East Portland.**

*The physical landscape of the African and African American community in Portland has been altered through the city’s development activities. While cannot change the past, we do have the ability to shape the future. One way to explore racial and spatial inequities is through an assessment of the level of satisfaction Africans and African Americans experience with transit service provision. This type of research can lead to a set of recommendations to improve the transit system in a way that addresses racial and spatial inequities. Portland State University may also be a research partner on this effort.*

**AM2.3: Partner with OPAL and EPAP to advocate that TriMet ensures that future transit payment systems can be used by low income earners, specifically people without credit cards or mobile devices.**

*There are active discussions happening on this topic between TriMet and OPAL. Trimet plans to implement electronic fare, or e-fare, as the primary mode for payment which has negative implications on the mobility of low income people. Partnering with OPAL and TriMet may be an effective strategy for understanding how to implement e-fare without compromising the mobility of low-income people who may be transit dependent.*

“The nearest north-south transit line, you’d have to go to 18 something or go back to 122nd to access good, family-wage, blue-collar jobs along the Columbia River. So, advocating for a north-south line...we have decent east-west lines but we have nothing north-south to connect to jobs.”

**East Portland Participant**

**Goal AM3: Improve transit facilities to better ensure comfort and cultural-appropriateness.**

Many mobility discussions during the public engagement process of this plan revolved around Trimet. Indeed, research indicates that African and African American Portlanders ride transit more frequently than other groups. Recognizing this relationship, the student team determined that Trimet has a special responsibility to provide culturally sensitive service for its African and African American riders. Their suggestions are presented below.

**AM3.1: Partner with OPAL and EPAP to ensure that TriMet regularly and continually assesses common languages spoken in East Portland and maintains multilingual transit service information on-board vehicles and at bus stops and MAX stations.**

*Community members expressed concern that African immigrant population may be overlooked when Trimet provides translated material, including scheduling and other “how to” sorts of publications. Especially given how quickly numbers of immigrants from various nations can change, it is possible that a large number is not recognized by a large agency like Trimet because their numbers have yet to show up in the Census or similar data sources.*

**AM3.2: Partner with the Portland Police Bureau, TriMet and the City of Portland to increase the number of African and African American transit officers in East Portland.**

*As discussed earlier, community members said that fare enforcement and similar actions performed by transit police officers are disproportionately enforced on African American Portlanders. They went on to suggest that a more culturally literate transit police force, namely one with more black officers, would be preferable and might enforce rules in a more equitable manner.*

**AM3.3: Partner with TriMet and the Regional Arts & Culture Council (RACC) to identify opportunities to integrate African and African American history and culture into educational boards and public art at existing bus stops and MAX stations in East Portland.**

*There are generally fewer funds available for public art on existing facilities. Federal matching funds require agencies to dedicate a percentage of capital project dollars to public art on new investments. This indicates a potential future funding source to implement this action.*

“It would be different if they were from the community that they serve. And respected by the community. So they wouldn’t have to wear that whack ass suit that they always wear.”

**East Portland Participant**

ACCESS & MOBILITY			
Recommendation	Timeline*	Key Stakeholders	
AM1.1	Fund new and improved sidewalks, lighting and crosswalks near bus stops and MAX stations in East Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, EPAP, City of Portland, TriMet, Oregon State Legislature
AM1.2	Advocate for new routes, expanded routes and improved frequency of existing routes in East Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, OPAL, EPAP, TriMet
AM1.3	Install safety mechanisms at East Portland MAX stations	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	TriMet, Portland Police
AM2.1	Increase awareness of East Portland-specific access and mobility needs and inequities	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, TriMet, OPAL, EPAP, City of Portland BPS, Urban League
AM2.2	Advocate that TriMet assess job commute and general transit needs of Africans and African Americans in East Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, OPAL, TriMet, Portland State University, City of Portland OEHR
AM2.3	Advocate that TriMet ensure future transit payment systems can be used by low income earners	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, TriMet, OPAL, EPAP
AM3.1	Ensure that transit service and on-board information is accessible in common languages spoken in East Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	TriMet, IRCO/Africa House, AYCO, OPAL, EPAP, Coalition for Communities of Color, Portland State University
AM3.2	Increase representation of African and African American transit officers in East Portland	Long term <i>8+ years</i>	PAALF, TriMet, Portland Police, EPAP
AM3.3	Identify opportunities to integrate Black history and culture at existing bus stops and MAX stations in east Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, TriMet, RAAC, Division Midway Alliance, Rosewood Initiative, PDC

Abbreviations

- AYCO African Youth and Community Organization
- BPS Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
- EPAP East Portland Action Plan
- IRCO Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization
- OEHR Office of Equity and Human Rights
- OPAL OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon
- PDC Portland Development Commission
- RACC Regional Arts & Culture Council

\*Because significant public investment will be going into transit system improvement in East Portland, many of these recommendations are reasonable to advocate for and implement in the short or medium term.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



## MY STORY

"I'm Oromro, the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia. I came 2006. My family's back home, by myself for 8 years. I used to work as a junior clinical nurse. I had to start from the beginning [in the US]. I was working night to help my family back home. Going to school day time. My major is Community Health education. If I like business, I could start just as I came rather than spending this amount of time. Business good for money, but education can help society."

## MY CHALLENGE

"I used to work at gas station in SE [PDX]. I had to walk from Fairview to Gresham transit 4-5a. Because at 5 I have to get the bus. Most of the people are low income. They don't have car. I see many people waiting for the bus."

## MY DREAM

"African Americans in N. PDX are better than those outside there. That means the closer you live to resources. When I say resources, not only material, but people as a resource who can make a difference. But people who are living in [the pilot] area, don't have such opportunities. Even if they made some mistakes, there are ways they can be changed to a good person. Good people who can make a difference."

# BESHURA KAME

Age: 49

A College Grad

A Clinical Nurse

A Humanitarian

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Beshura works at the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization's Africa House. He received his Bachelor's of Community Health in 2014 and plans to apply for his Master's degree.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**AFRICANS AND AFRICAN AMERICANS POSSESS THE NEEDED SKILLS TO EFFECTIVELY COMPETE FOR JOBS, ENJOY REGION-WIDE ACCESS TO FAMILY WAGE JOBS AND CONTRIBUTE TO THRIVING BUSINESS DISTRICTS IN EAST PORTLAND.**

Economic development is traditionally understood as the set of actions taken by policy makers and community members that promote the standard of living and economic health of a city or region. East Portland is challenged by higher rates of unemployment and poverty. There are fewer job opportunities located in East Portland, as well as lower rates of homeownership. Additionally, project participants expressed concerns about improving opportunities for developing the skills needed to work, as well as expanding support for emerging entrepreneurs to establish their own businesses in East Portland.

In response to the needs identified by project participants, the team recommends the following set of goals:

**Goal ED1:** Cultivate a dramatic increase of African and African American-owned businesses in East Portland

**Goal ED2:** Increase community wealth and social capital of Black people in East Portland

**Goal ED3:** Ensure long-term sustainable economic development in East Portland

**Goal ED 4:** Increase access to family wage jobs

The following section offers more concrete strategies and actions to meet these goals.



## STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

### **Goal ED1: Cultivate a dramatic increase of African and African American-owned businesses in East Portland.**

During the planning process, many community members expressed the need for African and African American-oriented places. Participants expressed the need for barber shops, grocery stores and Mid K Beauty-type establishments as the sorts of places that would give the African American community of East Portland that kind of space. Community members said these would be the spaces in which building a sense of community could begin. Additionally, culturally specific services were cited as a need within East Portland’s Black community. African American owned medical, mental health and dental practices could provide a more culturally competent type of assistance.

**ED1.1: Partner with leaders in the Black Business community, as well as IRCO, PDC and Mercy Corps Northwest to conduct a study to better support Black-owned businesses in East Portland.**

*In response to community members’ suggestion that there are very few Black-owned businesses in East Portland, the student team suggests that an implementer of this recommendation seek out ways to better support Black-owned businesses. Some of the barriers identified include access to information, networks and capital. The knowledge possessed by the team in this area is limited, however it was clear from our discussions with community members that identifying the needs and issues of the Black business community may be an effective first step. Such a study may also include a market analysis to help aspiring business owners find potential gaps in retail and services in East Portland that are needed. Leaders in the Black business community, in addition to IRCO, Mercy Corps Northwest, PDC and Portland State University would be valuable partners and resources for implementing this action.*

“So what happened is that our economic base was undermined by integration. In the south, there is still a lot of black business. Up here, there are virtually none. There were restaurants, nightclubs, hardware stores, funeral homes. Now all of those businesses don’t exist.”

**East Portland Participant**

## Goal ED2: Increase community wealth and social capital of African and African American people in East Portland.

Access to capital and homeownership opportunities are critical elements in making a community more resilient to displacement. Furthermore, the establishment of a popular business not only means that a local business person is making money, but that the community has a place to gather or meet their needs. Finally, broad homeownership allows a community to jointly make decisions ranging from collective bargaining with a developer to collective resistance to government policy that impacts a neighborhood. Potential strategies to work towards this goal are provided below.

### ED2.1: Partner with the Albina Community Bank to identify ways to establish a Black-Owned community bank in East Portland.

*Participants suggested the need for a Black-owned community bank. In response, the student team recommends exploratory action. While we do not possess expertise on how to open a bank, we do offer a few suggestions for initial steps. First, conduct background research about community development financial institutions -- these are banks that provide credit and financial services to underserved markets and populations. They are an important resource for people who have difficulty obtaining credit from mainstream banks. The Albina Community Bank is a local case study and potential partner and resource for future action on this goal. It could also be helpful to convene experts in community development and financing to assess grant opportunities and other capital resources for opening a branch of the Albina Community Bank, or establishing a new community development financial institution in East Portland.*

“There is opportunity up and down this street, there just aren’t businesses to serve this community. How are we making connections to business? Like there is a dentist’s office just down the street, you find me a black dentist and I will find a way to get them into that office.”

**East Portland Participant**

**ED2.2: Increase affordable homeownership opportunities for Africans and African Americans in East Portland by partnering with organizations like the African American Alliance for Homeownership, Portland Housing Bureau, Portland Housing Center and Proud Ground.**

*Throughout the planning process community members suggested that Africans and African Americans in East Portland live predominantly in apartment buildings along major streets. Participants also suggested that more affluent East Portlanders live in houses in neighborhoods generally separated from major streets. Participants view this negatively because of poor living conditions and segregation from the broader East Portland community. Research also shows that renters are more vulnerable to neighborhood change that might lead to displacement. Because of these concerns, the team recommends that implementers of this goal seek methods to increase affordable homeownership among the African and African American community. One method to accomplish this goal is to explore collaborations with the African American Alliance for Homeownership, Portland Housing Center, City of Portland Housing Bureau, Habitat for Humanity and Proud Ground. Coordination of a variety of activities and services with these partners could increase homeownership opportunities for those that might not otherwise have the ability.*

**ED2.3 Partner with the Black United Fund of Oregon, Portland Community College and Mount Hood Community College to identify ways to reduce barriers to college education for Africans and African Americans.**

*Participants value college education for African and African American youth because of its potential to improve social and economic conditions. They also view the costs of a college education a significant barrier. Therefore, the student team recommends that implementors of this goal seek ways to make college education more affordable for East Portland's African and African American youth. The Black United Fund of Oregon may be an ideal implementation partner because of their existing scholarship program. However, other partners may also include Portland Community College and Mount Hood Community College. Convening higher education experts may also yield more targeted strategies for reducing barriers that African and African American students in East Portland experience.*

“A challenge, and a huge one out here is the differential between apartment dwellers and homeowners. The moment you step off of Stark, Burnside, 162nd there is a lot of folks who came here to have these homes and so there is a huge divide.”

**East Portland Participant**

**Goal ED3: Ensure long-term sustainable economic development in East Portland.**

Often, investments in mass transit or urban renewal areas make the surrounding neighborhoods more desirable. From the Pearl District to the Interstate region of North Portland, areas once ignored by the city became attractive, but unaffordable for most. Making this transition anywhere means significant amounts in city spending, ranging from construction to engineering. After the spending is complete, transit operators and electricians maintain and operate these investments. This process did not go unnoticed by participants in the public engagement activities. When informed of the presence of an urban renewal area, as well as a planned mass transit line along Division Street, participants suggested any jobs generated by these investments, or developments resulting from them, ought to be filled by local residents if at all possible. In this way, the investment in a community will improve the prospects of residents of that neighborhood as well as its infrastructure.

**ED3.1: Collaborate with organizations like IRCO, OPAL, APANO and others in East Portland to negotiate an agreement with the City of Portland to ensure that at least 30% of jobs through development-related activities in East Portland go to locals from historically marginalized communities.**

*City plans for the Powell-Division Bus Rapid Transit System and the Division-Midway Urban Renewal Area will be active in East Portland in the immediate future. This presents an opportunity for PAALF and its partners in East Portland to negotiate a community benefits agreement with developers to demand first source hiring of no less than 30% of East Portland residents on the various projects in the area.*

*An alternative to the community benefits agreement would be a cooperative agreement directly with the Portland Development Commission and the City of Portland. In a cooperative agreement, PAALF and its partners could establish expectations for accountability and inclusion in public processes and requirements for delivering community benefits for existing residents in East Portland in all development activities that receive substantial public dollars. Accomplishing this goal will require immediate action.*

*An initial step would include case study research of similar negotiations in other cities, a landmark case to study would be the L.A. Live Community Benefits Agreement. Convening East Portland stakeholder organizations, community development advocates, and legal experts must also be included as an immediate action. Pursuing this goal requires coalition building and organizing to leverage community power and support for this work.*

**Goal ED4: Increase access to family wage jobs.**

Given the rapidly increasing cost of living in the Portland area, affordability is a major concern. During this pilot process, community members frequently commented that they struggled to get by. Additionally, those participants that were displaced from N/NE Portland identified the inability to afford living there as the reason that they moved. Research shows incoming investments like the bus rapid transit system in East Portland have potential to increase housing costs and pressure low income residents to move. Therefore, increasing access to family wage jobs is one strategy for ensuring long-term neighborhood stability in East Portland. Some concrete strategies and actions include:

**ED4.1: Partner with the Portland Community College Swan Island Trades Center to increase training programs for skills that are in high demand by establishing a workforce development center(s) in East Portland.**

*Skills such as welding, plumbing, and carpentry are in a great deal of demand in the Portland Metro Area. Meanwhile, workers with those skills are scarce. These conditions suggest that, for example, a welder would rarely be out of work and would also be paid well. An additional benefit to a workforce development center would be its cost-effectiveness. While many young adults attend college for long periods of time and at great cost, those seeking education in trades will likely be able to finish earlier and with less student debt.*

*When discussing such an arrangement, pilot participants mentioned Self Enhancement Inc. as an example. While it would be ideal for such an institution to come to East Portland, smaller iterations ought to be pursued as well. A potential partner and resource may be Portland Community College Swan Island Trades Center. Explore the potential of setting up a satellite center in East Portland through repurposing small, unused buildings and staffing them with willing, skilled community members. Tools or other materials might be procured by requesting donations of community members or community-minded businesses, such as Fred Meyers, Lowe's, Home Depot, Ace Hardware or other, more local establishments.*

“Most of the time a lot of the houses my family used to live in got really expensive and so then like they moved over here because it was like cheaper.”

**East Portland Participant**

**ED4.2: Merge job training with neighborhood improvement activities by partnering with PDC and local churches.**

*In addition to the above mentioned workforce development center, the student team recommends that any neighborhood revitalization projects (e.g. building improvements to houses or businesses, or landscaping initiatives) include interested African or African American youth or young adults, or individuals seeking to develop job skills. These arrangements could work like apprenticeships, with African and African American youth and young adults assisting professionals or experienced community members in projects. Such projects might be spearheaded by the National Association of Minority Contractors Oregon Chapter, Portland Development Commission, local churches, or Habitat for Humanity. Implementers of this recommendation ought to reach out to such organizations and see if they would be willing to help in imparting some trade expertise to apprentices.*

“Guys that would bring kids into my Coalition Neighborhood. Instead of taking them to jail, they’d put them in my work crew. Some of those kids that cleaned the graffiti off of the wall, painted it; and we went by it the next day or next week, and somebody ‘hit’ that—tagged it. They were angry. It wasn’t just “The Man’s” wall, it was their wall.” **East Portland Participant**

**ED4.3: Advocate for increasing the minimum wage by joining the 15 Now Portland Coalition to support the eradication of poverty wages in the state.**

*Data suggest that Africans and African Americans are disproportionately represented in low paying or minimum wage jobs. Therefore, in order to protect against future displacement among this community, the student team recommends that PAALF and partner organizations align advocacy with existing efforts to pressure elected leaders to increase the minimum wage in the City of Portland and the State of Oregon. The organization 15 Now PDX is a local coalition of labor organizations, community-based groups, and political associations active in building grassroots power for a living wage. Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles have successfully passed measures to increase the minimum wage and can serve as potential models.*



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
Recommendation	Timeline	Key Stakeholders	
ED1.1	Conduct a study to better support Black-owned businesses in East Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, Portland African American Chamber of Commerce, Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs, Black Dollar Days Task Force, other Black business leaders, IRCO, PDC, Mercy Corps Northwest, Portland State University
ED2.1	Identify ways to establish a Black-owned community bank in East Portland	Long term <i>8+ years</i>	PAALF, Alibina Community Bank, local community development and finance experts
ED2.2	Increase affordable homeownership opportunities for Africans and African Americans in East Portland	Medium term <i>4 - 7 years</i>	PAALF, African American Alliance for Homeownership, Portland Housing Bureau, Portland Housing Center, Proud Ground, Habitat for Humanity
ED2.3	Identify ways to reduce barriers to college education for Black students in East Portland	Medium term <i>4 - 7 years</i>	PAALF, Black United Fund of Oregon, Portland Community College, Mount Hood Community College
ED3.1	Negotiate an agreement with the City of Portland to ensure at least 30% of jobs through development go to locals from historically marginalized communities	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, City of Portland, PDC, IRCO, OPAL, APANO, AYCO, EPAP, other East Portland based stakeholder organizations, local community development and legal experts
ED4.1	Increase access to skill sets that are in high demand by establishing a workforce development center in East Portland	Medium term <i>4 - 7 years</i>	PCC Swan Island Trades center, SEI, PDC, Southeast Works, Snow Cap
ED4.2	Merge job training with neighborhood improvement activities in East Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PDC, National Association of Minority Contractors Oregon Chapter, Habitat for Humanity, local churches, Rosewood Initiative, Division Midway Alliance
ED4.3	Advocate for increasing the minimum wage	Long term <i>8+ years</i>	PAALF, 15 Now Portland Coalition

Abbreviations

- APANO Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
- AYCO African Youth and Community Organization
- EPAP East Portland Action Plan
- IRCO Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization
- OPAL OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon
- PCC Portland Community College
- PDC Portland Development Commission
- SEI Self Enhancement Inc.

YOUTH

## OUR STORY

"We meet every Wednesday. They help w/ what we need for college and discuss problems we go through being Black or whatever. Just recently we went to a luncheon and listened to a bunch of business people telling their story. We got to communicate w/ them, get cards, and learn. We finally got our 1st Black history assembly that we've been trying to get for years. It was like a big thing."

## OUR CHALLENGE

"I could never buy anything from that store because I'm always being followed. I walk in and hold my money out just so they know I'm not going to steal. So like you have to walk around cautious that you don't get reported for something you didn't do."

"Why you got kids going around shooting people and going to parties because there's literally nothing for us to do. My mom goes to mayor meetings and they said they don't have the money. That's not true because every time a person gets arrested, that's \$500 towards the State. They should take that money and invest in something good instead of letting people go crazy. They don't want to see kids progress to something better. They want them to stay down and keep making money off of them."

# BLACK STUDENT UNION

David Douglas High School  
The Next Generation

## OUR DREAM

"Oh my god, I know something I like in NE we don't have here. We had a program called SEI [Self Enhancement Inc]. After school, buses take us to the center. First you finish your homework, then you have activities. They had a summer program, you went on a lot of field trips. At the end, you get money. Well the kids got Target cards. I love that stuff!...That would help a lot."

"We're in a struggle basically to have something teenagers can do for free or little pay. That would make a huge difference. Like how they used to have Field Days where you go to any park and bring a whole bunch of games. Oh the twirly whirly thing that used to go up! You go under and it was a balloon! They still have field days, but for like 6 year olds. It ain't no age limit on having fun!"

# YOUTH

## **AFRICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN YOUTH IN EAST PORTLAND HAVE ACCESS TO SAFE SPACES AND OTHER RESOURCES FOR SOCIALIZATION, RECREATION AND ARTISTIC EXPRESSION.**

Youth issues were an important consideration for project participants. While a majority of them were adults, many shared concerns about providing enough support and resources for youth. Older members of the group observed that more youth today are growing up in broken homes and fragmented communities where fewer community members are able to look out for each other.

Community centers are one of those places that can provide a second home and extra set of eyes to watch over the youth in a community. A lack of enriching activities and programming for youth between the ages of 13 and 21, however, was a prominent issue among the adults, particularly those who identified as parents. Students participating in a high school focus group also echoed these concerns. In addition, transportation issues arose among the high school students as an area where they would like to see improvement.

In response to this input, the student team recommends the following set of goals:

**Goal Y1:** Provide more low-cost/free youth focused activities in East Portland, particularly for youth between the ages of 13 and 21.

**Goal Y2:** Provide mental, physical and spiritual spaces and support services for Black youth in East Portland.

**Goal Y3:** Improve mobility for youth in East Portland.

The following section offers more concrete strategies and actions to meet these goals.

## STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

**Goal Y1: Provide more low-cost/free youth focused activities in East Portland, particularly for youth between the ages of 13 and 21.**

In a focus group, members of the Black Student Union (BSU) at David Douglas High School expressed frustration with the limited outlets for youth to have fun or hang out. One student spoke about her family’s financial struggles and wished that there were more things to do for teenagers that were free or low-cost. The following strategies and actions were developed in order to address youth identified challenges in East Portland.

**Y1.1: Partner with BSU, Boys and Girls Club of Portland and Friends of Children to support and help plan incoming youth services.**

*Two nationally recognized organizations have plans to open youth service facilities in East Portland and Gresham within the next two years. The Boys and Girls Club of Portland will be opening at SE Stark Street and 165th Avenue in the Rockwood Neighborhood of Gresham. It will be a 30,000 square foot facility with a full gym. Friends of Children will build its new 8,000 square foot facility on the former Police Activities League site at 172nd Avenue and NE Glisan Street. Implementers of this goal can coordinate with Rosewood Initiative and the BSU at David Douglas High School to assess any programming gaps and to coordinate a holistic approach for serving youth needs in East Portland. For example, the Boys and Girls Club may specialize in recreational activities, while Rosewood Initiative offers employment assistance. These two organizations can support youth to meet a wider range of needs by coordinating a referral system.*

“I think Portland should get more things for the kids to do. Because there’s literally nothing for kids to do out here.”

**BSU David Douglas High School**

**Y1.2: Partner with the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS), Groundwork Portland and BSU to promote youth activities and programs in underutilized and/or vacant spaces.**

*There are numerous vacant buildings in East Portland that can possibly be reused to provide space for much needed youth activities or programming. Temporary, or pop-up, programming is a strategy used to help building owners, community members, and investors see the potential of a vacant property to become a successful business and contribute to vibrant place. Implementers of this goal should know that the student team and PAALF People’s Plan Project Manager have initiated a conversation with City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability around potential collaboration along the future bus rapid transit route on SE Division Street. Additionally, the team suggests collaborating with BSU, Rosewood Initiative and Groundwork Portland to identify suitable places and desirable programming for youth in East Portland. Together, these groups can create a work plan to identify and activate vacant spaces, while also activating youth in work that directly improves their neighborhoods, builds community, and meets their needs.*

**Y1.3: Partner with BPS and BSU to develop a social media marketing campaign to encourage youth-friendly businesses in East Portland to provide reduced prices to youth.**

*There are likely entertainment activities that can be made more affordable for youth, or places that can provide more options for affordable youth activities. For example, members of BSU mentioned that they like going to \$5 Movie Night at the Regal Cinema on the corner of 162nd Avenue and SE Division Street. On Tuesdays, the Regal Cinema turns into a popular hang out spot for youth. Surrounding businesses and restaurants can build off of this by also offering reduced prices on the same night. Implementers of this strategy may also want to consider coordinating alternative days of the week that will not conflict with school responsibilities. Focusing on the area near the movie theatre may be strategic since it is located along the future bus rapid transit line and may attract future establishments that can also cater to youth. This effort may be a fun and creative collaboration with BSU and City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability. The student team suggests working with interested youth to develop a work plan, marketing strategy or social media campaign to promote youth-friendly businesses in East Portland, or throughout the city.*

“But I think what puts a halt on all of that with teens in this community is the financial part of it. We don’t live in the richest part of Oregon...we’re in a struggle basically. To have something that teenagers can do for free or with little to no pay. I think that would make a huge difference.”

**BSU David Douglas High School**

**Goal Y2: Provide mental, physical and spiritual spaces and support services for Black youth in East Portland.**

Many of the students in the BSU focus group wished for an East Portland location of an organization like Self Enhancement Inc (SEI), a nonprofit community center supporting primarily African American at-risk urban youth between the ages of 8 and 25. The organization serves as a “second family” by providing multiple enrichment programs supplementing home life and the public school system, as well as a coordinator that assists with creating individual plans for student success and available support 24/7 for personal crises.

**Y2.1: Partner with SEI to increase and support programming for Black youth education and empowerment in East Portland.**

*Besides the lack of activities, there are few places with programming specifically tailored to support and empower Black youth in East Portland. We believe that community members may view SEI so highly because its programming invests in the complete potential of each Black youth and their families.*

“Oh I know something that I like over in NE that we don’t have here. After school we had a program called SEI. After school buses would take us to the center and first when we got there, you finish your homework. Then you have activities to go to. You meet in the auditorium. The talk with you...

They just encourage you to do a lot of things.” **BSU David Douglas High School**

[www.pdxpeoplesplan.org](http://www.pdxpeoplesplan.org)

**Goal Y3: Improve mobility for youth in East Portland.**

Getting to and from school, work, and activities is a major part of daily life for youth. Much like the adults in our pilot process, transportation was found to be a lifeline for accessing opportunities and socializing. Some of the BSU students ride the school bus, while others choose TriMet. With either option, however, the BSU students identified conditions that make commuting challenging. BSU students indicated that the David Douglas High School buses are crowded and not always the preferred option for getting to and from school and various activities. Some students choose to ride TriMet, however they commented that the buses do not run frequently enough -- some of them commuting as far as N/NE neighborhoods to attend classes at David Douglas High School. Finally, some of the students mentioned walking far distances, taking as long as 25 minutes to get to school from the bus stop.

Y3.1: Improve school bus and transit service to better serve classes and after-school activities.

*Reflecting back the concerns of BSU students, we recommend improving school bus service by increasing the number of buses available during peak commuting times for students. Additional assessment of David Douglas School District bus service may be needed before implementing this recommendation. BSU students also indicated TriMet Line 20 as the bus with the longest wait times and TriMet Line 72 as the ideal frequency for their needs. An ideal implementation partner for addressing high school youth transit issues may be the Multnomah Youth Commission, whose members advocate on a wide range of youth issues at the city, county, and regional level.*

“I would say the NE, buses run like every 5-10 minutes. The 72. The 20 runs every 15 minutes. I wish the 20 could run like the 72 does. Because if you miss the 72 then you know there’s one coming right after. But if you miss the 20, you gotta wait forever. I hate missing that bus.”

**BSU David Douglas High School**



YOUTH			
Recommendation		Timeline	Key Stakeholders
Y1.1	Support and help plan incoming youth services in East Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, David Douglas High School Black Student Union, Boys and Girls Club of Portland, Friends of Children, Rosewood Initiative
Y1.2	Promote youth activities and programs in underutilized and/or vacant spaces in East Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, City of Portland BPS, PDC, Groundwork Portland, BSU, Rosewood Initiative
Y1.3	Encourage youth-friendly businesses in East Portland to provide reduced prices to youth	Medium term <i>4 - 7 years</i>	PAALF, City of Portland BPS, BSU
Y2.1	Increase and support programming for Black youth education and empowerment in East Portland	Short term <i>0 - 3 years</i>	PAALF, SEI, BSU, AYCO
Y3.1	Improve school bus and transit-services to better serve classes and after-school activities in East Portland	Medium term <i>4 - 7 years</i>	PAALF, David Douglas School District, TriMet, BSU, Multnomah Youth Commission

Abbreviations

- AYCO African Youth and Community Organization
- BPS Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
- BSU Black Student Union at David Douglas High School
- PDC Portland Development Commission
- SEI Self Enhancement Inc.



# AREAS FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION

Because of constraints on time, the student team was unable to explore and research certain issues more deeply. To support the ongoing work of PAALF on the People's Plan, the student team offers recommendations for continued exploration of the following topic areas:

**Health & Well-being**  
**Safety & Security**  
**Housing**

## HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Health and well-being was a prominent theme throughout our discussions with project participants. Community members emphasized mental health issues and expressed concerns about the lack of culturally-appropriate mental health care available in East Portland. Participants also discussed challenges with accessing other health services in the area, suggesting inconsistent provision across the Portland city boundary. Many also mentioned the concentration of community-based health programs in N/NE neighborhoods, with limited reach in East Portland. We acknowledge our limited expertise in this area, however offer potential actions and areas of further assessment by more capable professionals in the community health field:

1. Convene health experts and professionals to conduct an assessment of African and African American health issues in East Portland;
2. Create and disseminate an inventory of existing programs, services, and organizations that address the health needs of Africans and African Americans in the Portland Metropolitan Area;
3. Create and disseminate an inventory of culturally-competent mental health care providers in East Portland;
4. Increase community awareness of existing local services that provide culturally-competent care for Africans and African American residents;
5. Develop a plan to support and expand community-based, culturally-competent health promotion activities into East Portland;
6. Study interjurisdictional provision of healthcare services to assess any service gaps negatively impacting residents living in the surrounding East Portland/Gresham area; and
7. Collaborate with East Portland groups to create forums to communicate concerns and ask questions specific to medical care and emergency response procedures.

## SAFETY & SECURITY

The safety and security of African and African American residents is currently in the national spotlight. Our team was unable to dive into this topic with pilot participants in East Portland. However, recognizing the urgency of this issue, the student team suggests a PAALF People's Plan session to explore safety and security issues in East Portland. Based on the community input that led to Mobility Recommendation 1.3, we suspect that there may be other crime prevention strategies in place that unintentionally create unsafe conditions for Africans and African Americans, as well as other residents of East Portland. Further study and assessment is needed to develop recommendations grounded in the perceptions and experiences of community members.

# HOUSING

The East Portland Pilot Plan focuses on steps for (re)building a sense of community and a sense of place for Africans and African Americans in East Portland. However, proactive measures must be taken in order to ensure long-term stability and resilience for this community in East Portland.

Community members point to the high level of segregation that Africans and African Americans experience through housing in East Portland. Concentrated in apartment buildings along major streets and physically separated from single family residential areas, members of the community are extremely vulnerable to neighborhood changes that may uproot families once again and force them out of the city altogether. Based on what was heard in the planning process, the PAALF People's Plan should include the advocacy of measures that carry out the following goals:

1. **Improve housing conditions:** A few of our key informants mentioned moldy apartments and plumbing issues. These are threats to the health, safety, and quality of life to African and African American residents. Policy recommendations are needed to improve the housing conditions of these residents in East Portland and throughout the city.
2. **Protect renters:** Limiting the ability of landlords to evict tenants without reason helps to increase neighborhood stability. There are currently no city or state laws that require this protection, making renters vulnerable to the interests of landlords.
3. **Preserve affordability:** Now is the time to assess opportunities for land banking in East Portland that will preserve affordability into the future. Rent control is another option for exploration, but will require some legal expertise. There is an existing work group studying these options in East Portland. Collaborating with the Metro Equity Steering Committee on the Powell-Division Bus Rapid Transit Project may increase potential for implementation of this goal.

“The reasons the houses look like that. Not because of the people living there. It’s the managers. You know they just let it go down. They don’t care. Don’t say nothing because you’ll be out.” **East Portland Participant**

# 4

## MOVING FORWARD



## MY STORY

"I graduated at 16. 17 I went to honors vocational school. At the time who was President, Jimmy Carter? He wanted kids to merge together busing. So I was a part of that...I moved from Cleveland to Vancouver. N Fessenden was our first PDX house in 2001. I tried to find a nice house, but at that time they didn't want to rent so I found this place [in Gresham]."

## MY CHALLENGE

"In 1999 my father was murdered. I thought I was having a breakdown. I started going to counseling, that's when I started doing work that brought me to mental health... Labeling people is just a shame. If you really know what they going through, you have a better understanding in how to deal with them."

## MY DREAM

"That our kids would be proud of who they are. Especially the young man that's growing up, going through peer pressure, but on top of that they going through discrimination. If that would be gone, they be powerful.. I could picture going to a Negro-owned store, that'd be the most joyful. They get to know you in the neighborhood and they educate kids on how to be entrepreneurs,

# ETTA ASSUMAN

Age: Golden Years  
An Entrepreneur  
A Mental Health Advocate  
An Example

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Etta, with the assistance of the Individual Development Account program, ran her own janitorial business and is looking to open a business again. She is also currently in a 90 hour peer wellness training class.

## CARRYING OUT THE VISION

In this final chapter, the student team suggests a framework for determining where to go from here. We highlight particular recommendations we believe are ideal starting points in East Portland for the Portland African American Leadership Forum (PAALF), its partners, and residents who hope to (re)build a sense of place and community. The student team ends by exploring broader considerations of the role of city leaders and planners, as well as community members in finding ways better address the needs of community members who have been displaced.

## START WITH SMALL GAINS, THINK LONG TERM

Picking up the pieces of a fragmented community and (re)building in a new place will not be an easy task. To initiate the process, however, the student team highlights particular recommendations we believe are ideal starting points. Regardless of where they land on the timeline in Chapter 3, these are the recommendations that can be implemented immediately and help build a strong foundation for future advocacy, organizing and implementation of PAALF People's Plan in East Portland. They are presented here and grouped by thematic area.



## SENSE OF PLACE

### SP1.1 Facilitate neighborhood networking through organizing more forums in East Portland

- This can be incorporated into future community engagement for PAALF People's Plan with relative ease.
- Activities that accomplish this goal can contribute to strengthening networks and relationships, which may be helpful for future organizing and advocacy work.
- These types of activities also provide an avenue for community grieving and healing.

### SP3.2 Establish a community center specific to serving African and African Americans in East Portland

- This was a top issue for project participants.
- Immediate action can be taken to assess feasibility of carrying out this goal.
- Involving project participants may help to increase personal investment in PAALF People's Plan activities.

### SP4.1 Develop an East Portland Committee, advisory group or task force to regularly inform PAALF about community issues

- A core group of community members have emerged from this planning process.
- Providing avenues for immediate and continued engagement in PAALF People's Plan can help to carry forward momentum and action on the ground in East Portland.

### ACCESS AND MOBILITY

AM1.2 Advocate for new routes, expanded routes and improved frequency of existing routes in East Portland.

- Prioritizing service enhancements, such as better frequency and north-south connections in East Portland will help to unify Africans and African Americans in Portland by improving mobility.

AM3.3 Identify opportunities to integrate Black history and culture at existing and future bus stops and MAX Stations

- Because of the Powell-Division Bus Rapid Transit Project, immediate opportunities are available for designing public spaces to reflect the culture and history of residents.
- TriMet and the City of Portland have already expressed interest in addressing Black interests in East Portland through the BRT project.
- This may be an immediate opportunity to galvanize African and African American community members in East Portland to shape place.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### ED1.1 Conduct a study to support Black-owned businesses in East Portland

- Thus far, individuals representing Black business interests have not been engaged in the planning process.
- Involvement of Black business leaders may help to identify and better address needs and issues.
- This may also help to get the ball rolling on creating African and African American-oriented places in East Portland.

### ED3.1 Negotiate an agreement with the City of Portland to ensure at least 30% of jobs through development go to locals from historically marginalized communities

- Background research on existing plans in East Portland indicate that there will be significant changes within 5-10 years.
- Development activities led by the City of Portland will bring improved infrastructure as well as new development.
- Immediate action is required to organize and leverage widespread community power and ensure that existing residents benefit from new development now and into the future.

### YOUTH

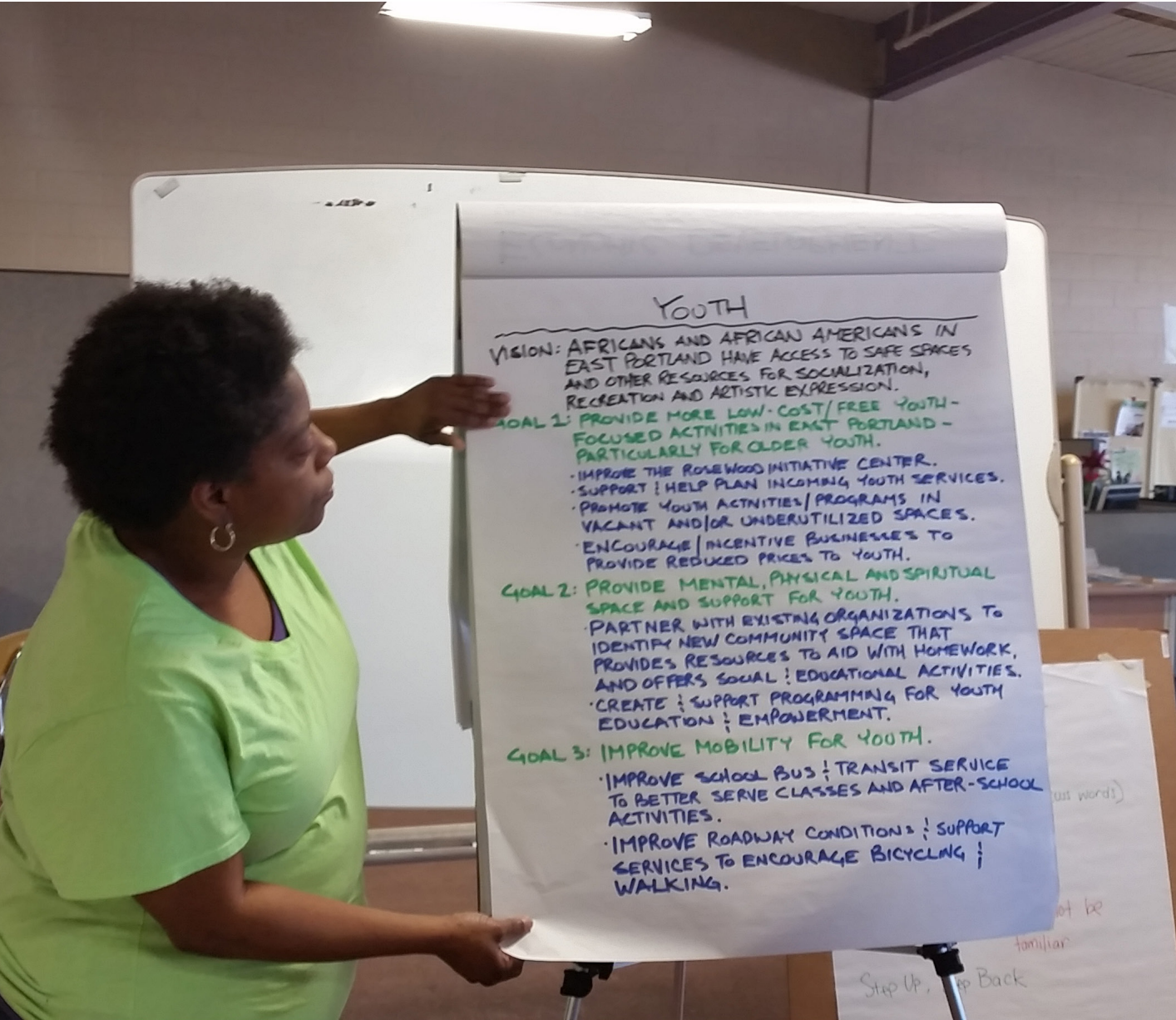
#### Y1.1 Support and help plan incoming youth services in East Portland

- There are current plans to locate two youth centers in East Portland, and there are additional recreation centers in the most recent East Portland Parks Plan.
- These plans are on a short timeline and present immediate opportunities for PAALF and its partners to ensure that the needs of African and African American youth are addressed.

#### Y1.2 Promote youth activities and programs in underutilized and/or vacant spaces in East Portland

- Underutilized and/or vacant spaces present immediate opportunities for revitalizing neighborhoods and injecting new energy into a community.
- Partnering with high school youth, property owners, and youth serving organizations can build capacity, strengthen social capital, while also celebrate the creativity of youth.

Ultimately, these suggestions here are a potential starting point and not meant to be prescriptive. They are ideal because many can be implemented with relatively minimal effort and are actionable in the short term. They also provide a strong footing to initiate a long term strategy for manifesting racial and spatial justice for the Black community of East Portland.



YOUTH

**VISION:** AFRICANS AND AFRICAN AMERICANS IN EAST PORTLAND HAVE ACCESS TO SAFE SPACES AND OTHER RESOURCES FOR SOCIALIZATION, RECREATION AND ARTISTIC EXPRESSION.

**GOAL 1:** PROVIDE MORE LOW-COST/FREE YOUTH-FOCUSED ACTIVITIES IN EAST PORTLAND - PARTICULARLY FOR OLDER YOUTH.

- IMPROVE THE ROSEWOOD INITIATIVE CENTER.
- SUPPORT ; HELP PLAN INCOMING YOUTH SERVICES.
- PROMOTE YOUTH ACTIVITIES/PROGRAMS IN VACANT AND/OR UNDERUTILIZED SPACES.
- ENCOURAGE / INCENTIVE BUSINESSES TO PROVIDE REDUCED PRICES TO YOUTH.

**GOAL 2:** PROVIDE MENTAL, PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL SPACE AND SUPPORT FOR YOUTH.

- PARTNER WITH EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS TO IDENTIFY NEW COMMUNITY SPACE THAT PROVIDES RESOURCES TO AID WITH HOMEWORK, AND OFFERS SOCIAL ; EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES.
- CREATE ; SUPPORT PROGRAMMING FOR YOUTH EDUCATION ; EMPOWERMENT.

**GOAL 3:** IMPROVE MOBILITY FOR YOUTH.

- IMPROVE SCHOOL BUS ; TRANSIT SERVICE TO BETTER SERVE CLASSES AND AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES.
- IMPROVE ROADWAY CONDITIONS ; SUPPORT SERVICES TO ENCOURAGE BICYCLING ; WALKING.

East Portland Pilot Plan Public Workshop #2, Rosewood Initiative

## MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

In the end, this is a plan for Black Portland. However, broader considerations must be made about the work it will entail to achieve equity in the city. There is a great need for collaboration and coordination in the recommendations presented in this plan. As a conclusion to this body of work, the student team considers the role of key players who will be instrumental for creating a city with neighborhoods where Black Lives Matter. Here, we examine additional tasks for PAALF People's Plan, city leaders and urban planners, as well as community members on the ground in hopes to spark meaningful dialogue about the complementary roles we play in this important work.

### TASKS FOR PAALF'S PEOPLE'S PLAN

One of the primary goals of PAALF People's Plan is to serve as a tool for advocacy. Yet, successful equity advocacy and implementation efforts require an approach that connects the experiences of people on the ground with the decisions about policies that shape communities [1]. This fundamentally requires the dynamic integration of organizing, capacity building, and research in PAALF People's Plan. Considering the unique conditions found in East Portland, the student team explicitly examines these tasks which have been woven into many of the recommendations included in this plan.

#### PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Challenging existing conditions and securing benefits to residents as development marches eastward requires deep organizing and community power. Therefore, the continued engagement of those directly affected must be a priority. While organizational capacity may be limited in East Portland, providing support today can help ensure a strong community voice in the future for disrupting enduring patterns of city development and displacement. The PAALF People's Plan might consider ways to improve communication with East Portland residents, especially regarding upcoming policy and planning decisions that will impact them. Furthermore, fostering solidarity across communities in East Portland might amplify community voice and power, especially with groups that may share similar interests.

[1] PolicyLink.(n.d.) Getting Equity Advocacy Results: Get ready: Build the base for equity advocacy. Retrieved from PolicyLink website: [www.policylink.org/gear](http://www.policylink.org/gear)

## PROVIDE CAPACITY BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

One of the ways to build capacity of community members in East Portland is to equip them with the knowledge and language to effectively engage in public decision-making processes. Throughout the pilot process, participants identified challenges that have largely been shaped by planning decisions, such as land use patterns and transit service issues. Incorporating community trainings into future community engagement activities can be an efficient way to enhance the impact of PAALF People's Plan on the ground.

## GATHER ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Because of the small scale nature of the pilot plan, gathering additional information in East Portland will be beneficial for future advocacy and implementation. These efforts also enhance community organizing efforts. Expanding research methods with a walking tour or photovoice project can help to further define community issues. Furthermore, conducting research to estimate the cost of projects listed in the final PAALF People's Plan can facilitate the process of securing funding for projects. Lastly, developing metrics for measuring progress will help to evaluate effective policy and goals. Consider the 10 Equity Indicators from the Metro Equity Baseline Report [2].

[2] Equity Baseline Report. (2015). Retrieved from Metro website: <http://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/Equity%20Baseline%20Report%202002-10-2015%20small.pdf>

## TASKS FOR CITY LEADERS AND URBAN PLANNING PROFESSIONALS

Additionally, how do we address the needs of post-displacement communities in an urban planning context? What role can city leaders and urban planners play in bringing about racial and spatial justice in the city? For the student team, these questions were central throughout the planning process and we emerge with a few lessons to share.

### ACKNOWLEDGE THE PAST

There have been many decisions made in the history of planning that have led us to the conditions we observe today in East Portland. From the auto centric planning policies of the 1950s to the systematic disinvestment of North and Northeast Portland, city leaders and urban planning professionals paved the way for market forces to gentrify the neighborhoods where Black people have historically lived. We now see the suburbanization of poverty, which has drastically altered the livelihood of inner city residents who once relied on the density of transit networks and jobs to make ends meet. The displacement of this community has also resulted in the loss of valuable social and cultural fabric. Knowing this history and understanding these outcomes in connection to planning decisions were motivating factors for team members to become involved in PAALF People's Plan.

### RECOGNIZE A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY

As future urban planning professionals, we also took to heart the task to “seek social justice by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration” [3]. The pilot project repeatedly garnered reactions from colleagues to be extremely challenging. This may be due to the difficult nature of confronting racial and spatial injustice with the people directly affected, as well as the institutions that systematically facilitate inequitable outcomes. Perhaps this reaction stems from feeling unprepared to step into this role, in which case the field will need better training to improve skills in this area.

“Portland wants to be a model for sustainability, for all of these other things. Why not this right here?”

**East Portland Participant**



## PROVIDE AVENUES FOR HEALING

In community settings, the student team agenda was frequently overridden by a more pressing need for participants to freely and openly discuss their grief. Would this be acceptable in typical city planning processes? Fullilove identifies our cultural aversion to emotion, especially expressions of pain, fear, despair and grief [4]. By limiting the time for people to grieve, urban planners may be losing opportunities to learn and develop innovative solutions to enduring urban planning problems. Through this process, we have learned that one potential way to allow for community healing of those who have been forced to move is to allow space for this expression and to meaningfully incorporate their stories into city planning activities.

## PRIORITIZE NEEDS AND ISSUES OF POST-DISPLACEMENT COMMUNITIES

No community has been more marginalized than Africans and African Americans in Portland, and perhaps in cities throughout the nation. From segregation to serial displacement, this community has bore the worst burden and continues to be alienated from planning processes. Besides the moral and ethical reasons to correct racial and spatial injustice, the economic imperative is undeniable. The U.S. is projected to reach a population with a majority of people of color by 2043 [5]. If racial gaps in income and opportunity remain unaddressed by policy makers and urban planners, we will lose trillions of dollars and fall behind in the globalized economy. It is not the cost to the economy that demands the most urgent attention, however, but the cost of human life. Movements like Black Lives Matter command attention to the need for dismantling racist systems, calling for a resurgence in the Civil Rights Movement. As planners, we have an important role to play. It requires us to be advocates and empower those who have historically been pushed down, displaced and ignored. It compels us to prioritize and protect the right to live in cities and neighborhoods of choice and opportunity.

[3] American Institute of Certified Planners. (n.d.) Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. Retrieved from <https://www.planning.org/ethics/ethicscode.htm>

[4] Fullilove, M. (2009). Root shock: How tearing up city neighborhoods hurts America, and what we can do about it. One World/Ballantine.

[5] Policylink. (2014). The Equity Solution: Racial Inclusion Is Key to Growing a Strong New Economy. Retrieved from Policylink

### TASKS FOR EAST PORTLAND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Finally, this plan reflects the hopes of Black people in East Portland who wish to (re)build a sense of place and community. If you also share in the hope of a better future for Africans and African Americans in East Portland, there are a few simple things fellow community members need to help carry out the vision of a thriving and vibrant Black community.

#### JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Throughout this planning process participants have shared a longing to connect and engage with other community members. If you have been directly impacted by the calamity of gentrification and displacement, can you find a moment to look back at the past for some inspiration for the future? Join the conversation to imagine a better future for Black people in Portland.

#### GET INVOLVED

Why not here? Why not now? There is a desire to create the arrival of a better East Portland for Black people, and it is evident in each of the stories featured throughout this plan. The challenges are broadly shared; they are overwhelming, isolating, and cannot be overcome without the help of the entire community. Real opportunities to make a better East Portland for Black people are within reach, but they will be hard to grab without the help of others. Therefore, your participation is important especially if you are still on the journey to find community and home.

## LEAD THE WAY

As the final workshop of this planning process came to a close, Etta, a community member, addressed the group:

“My final question is that I know that you all are gonna be leaving here, it is up to us to take over now... Before we leave here, let’s take on some responsibility... Let’s lead it. I’m willing to step up and make plans to have another meeting. How about you?”

How. About. You. This is where we begin, by calling on those who share the same history and challenges, the same dreams, but have not yet had someone ask, “How about you? Where is your voice, your ability, your power? How do you imagine a better future for Black people in East Portland?” This is how we move forward together, by leading the hard work of pondering the possibility to change the here and now and educating city and community leaders about what it needs to look like.

“We have to take over this community, take it over. Nobody else wants it right now. It is ripe to create a new Black community.”

**East Portland Participant**

**Accountable Development:** A framework for the transparency of, and inclusive public participation in, the processes of crafting, monitoring, and enforcing development agreements that use public tax payer dollars. This gives local residents a say in how their communities are redeveloped and ensures concrete, enforceable benefits that address local needs [1].

**Action:** Specific, time-constrained, measurable steps to enact strategies.

**African / African American / Black:** A group of residents of the United States whose ancestry can be totally or partially traced to any of the native populations of sub-Saharan Africa.

**Coding:** To organize pieces of data based on the unique characteristics of that data.

**Community Self-Determination:** The people of a given community possess self-determination, self-confidence, personal skills, relationships among and between neighborhoods and institutions, a sense of power over personal and neighborhood life, and access to and control of resources [2].

**Cultural fabric:** Norms, traditions and institutions which provide a foundation for a shared understanding of the culture and values of a given community.

**Displacement:** The market-driven relocation of individuals, groups and/or communities from their historical dwelling place. Includes not only the physical displacement of households, but also the displacement of culture, neighborhood characteristics and services. Displacement is closely coupled with gentrification and primarily impacts communities with populations characterized by high proportions of people of color, renters, low income earners, and low educational attainment.

**Equity:** A social goal defined by justice, fairness, inclusiveness and participation. Equity includes the consideration of historical disadvantage, marginalization, unequal opportunity in the determination of what is fair, right and good.

**Gentrification:** A process at the neighborhood scale and larger, by which continued new investment affects changes in neighborhood culture, property values and the economic class of neighborhood residents. Investment can be driven by the public sector, by individual real estate investors, or by the coordinated efforts of a real estate and development growth coalition.

[1] Good Jobs First. (n.d.) Accountable Development: Beginner's Guide. Retrieved from <http://www.goodjobsfirst.org/accountable-development>

[2] Fitzgerald, H.E. (2007). Restoring community self determination. *The Engaged Scholar Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://engagedscholar.msu.edu/magazine/volume2/fitzgerald.aspx>

**Goal:** Systemic changes necessary for an associated vision to become reality.

**Organizational capacity:** The ability of a community to undertake a given task to shape their neighborhood or environment. This entails community understanding of the policy process and strategies for engagement in the policy process, deepening knowledge of policy facts, and refining skills of strategizing and negotiating with decisions makers [3].

**Pan-African:** The solidarity of African immigrants and refugees and African Americans.

**Participatory:** characterized by or involving participation; especially : providing the opportunity for individual participation.

**Phenomenology:** A research method that factors in the way in which one perceives and interprets events and one's relationship to them in contrast both to one's objective responses to stimuli and to any inferred unconscious motivation for one's behavior.

**Pilot area:** The original area of focus for this project. It consists of five census tracts, their borders are roughly E Burnside and SE Stark Streets to the north; SE Powell and the Springwater Corridor Trail to the south; SE 122nd Avenue to the west; and SE 162nd Avenue to the east.

**Placemaking:** A practice in which community members and relevant stakeholders engage in land-based projects to enhance livability, social fabric, neighborhood, beauty, or other shared community values.

**Plan:** A detailed proposal for achieving a vision and/or a set of goals.

**Post-displacement communities:** Those communities which have left their previously established neighborhood, city, state etc., typically against their will and have since settled elsewhere.

**Resident:** Anyone who lives in a place, city neighborhood, etc. This term is used in this report in recognition of individuals across Portland that have yet to be recognized fully as citizens.

## GLOSSARY

**Root shock:** The traumatic stress reaction to the destruction of all or part of one's emotional ecosystem. It has important parallels to physiological shock.' Root shock can follow natural disaster, development-induced displacement, war, and changes that play out slowly such as those that accompany gentrification. [4]

**Social capital:** Refers to the collective value of all "social networks" (those that people know) and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other. [5]

**Spatial justice:** Refers to an intentional and focused emphasis on the spatial or geographical aspects of justice and injustice, this involves the fair and equitable distribution in space of socially valued resources and the opportunities to use them. [6]

**Strategy:** Methods to achieve associated goals.

**Vision:** The ideal future state of a people and/or place.

[4] Fullilove, M. (2009). *Root shock: How tearing up city neighborhoods hurts America, and what we can do about it*. One World/Ballantine.

[5] Harvard Kennedy School. (n.d.) About social capital. The Saguaro Seminar: *Civic Engagement in America*. Retrieved from <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/programs/saguaro/about-social-capital>

[6] Soja, E.W. ( 2008, March 14-18)). The city and spatial justice. Paper presented at Spatial Justice Conference. Retrieved from <http://www.jssj.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/JSSJ1-1en4.pdf>

**EPPP (East Portland Pilot Plan):** Refers to the name of the project and this document.

**MURP (Master of Urban and Regional Planning):** The team that compiled this report are students at Portland State University working towards their master's degree in urban and regional planning, or MURP for short.

**North and Northeast Portland (N/NE):** Refers to the historic Black neighborhoods of Portland, located in the urban core of the city and experiencing late-stage gentrification at the time this pilot plan was developed.

**PAALF (Portland African American Leadership Forum):** PAALF is the organization stewarding the People's Plan process. PAALF is a convener of African American people and organizations with the end goal of collaboration among the community.





# APPENDIX I:

## PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

## APPENDIX I : PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

## TODD

I come to this planning process with personal biases that manifest into the East Portland People's Plan. Being white and living most of my life in populations where blacks are a minority results in presumably my most obvious of biases. I acknowledge the existence of both positive and negative influences of Africans and African Americans throughout my life and influencing my work.

I was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin – a place commonly listed as one of the most segregated cities in the United States. Both maternal and paternal sides of my large extended family are from the city's South Side, an increasingly less-defined Polish neighborhood shared by Italians, Irish and other white, ethnic European descendants. The city's black population resided largely across a great divide of the Menominee River Valley – an area that I rarely visited as a child. My parents regularly shared stories of Milwaukee's racial tensions of the 1960s that peaked in the years before I was born. Most notably was the story of Father James Groppi, a white pastor and always a very intriguing figure to me, who was active in bringing attention to Milwaukee's discriminatory housing policies through bridge marches across the divide from the North Side to the South Side.

Racial tensions in the Milwaukee area – ones that I still witness as an outsider – persisted throughout my childhood. Chapter 220, a mandated bussing program that integrated inner city blacks with better-funded suburban schools was commonly ridiculed in the white community I was part of. Divisive figures like Michael McGee, a Milwaukee alderman who proposed violent against whites in response to racial injustices only fueled racial divisiveness, as did seemingly regular racial brutalities perpetrated on black males by officers from the Milwaukee Police Department.

While the area's school integration had many negative consequences, including a race riot in my junior year of high school that resulted in a lockdown, substantial media attention and subsequent racial counseling for the entire

student body, it also provided me some unique experiences. I developed friendships with black students and even experienced the surprising normalcy of black homes on the North Side. Still, long-held racial biases became clearly and personally evident when neighbors once alerted police when a black friend of mine walked down my neighborhood street and when white girls regularly acted awkwardly and hesitantly when providing their phone numbers to the friend. The memory of my dad even being angry at my then college-age sister for wanting to bring a black friend of hers home for Thanksgiving, while troubling to me at the time, still seemed to be a normal reaction in the context of Milwaukee in the 1980s.

Since then, my life has maintained minimal interactions with African and African American communities. I went to college in the middle of Iowa, where the only notable African American presence was through the school's basketball and football programs. My two years in Chicago were spent working for largely wealthy, white clients while living in the city's gentrified Southport neighborhood. I also lived my first ten years in Portland, Oregon – one of the 'whitest' cities in the United States – in inner Southeast, far removed from African Americans on the cities North and Northeast quadrants.

In 2009, this changed when I moved to Northeast Portland. My commute now takes me down NE MLK Blvd., a major spine of the city's black community, or N Williams/Vancouver, once the heart of it but now the front line in the city's gentrification debate. The infamous 'Trader Joe's site', recently the center of a racial debate about city subsidies for economic development, is just blocks away from me.

While I regularly joke around and have positive interactions with my black neighbors, there remains an underlying 'us' and 'them' tension that I presume is mutual. I know that my presence – as well as some anticipation of nearby economic development projects like a new grocery store – does little to aid the welfare of African Americans and people of lower income who are being displaced to areas of East Portland and East Multnomah County. Yet, my aware-

## APPENDIX I

ness on racial issues relevant to my neighborhood and to Portland through this and other projects that I've recently collaborated on with Metro and the City of Portland has provided me a much better understanding that my home – as well as the homes in other cities I've lived in – provides me a much different vantage point than African Americans have living in the very same neighborhoods.

### CHRISTINE

Despite identifying as a person of color and multiple years primarily working in, and collaborating with, communities of color, I have a limited knowledge and experience for engaging African and African American communities in a focused way. However, I approach this project with the understanding that engaging communities of color necessitates strategies that account for unique cultural and community factors that typically create barriers in mainstream participation.

Before getting into college, I rarely thought of myself in relation to African and African American communities, or black people. However, one day I found myself in an organizing space where cross-community understanding and coordination was paramount to pursuing important advocacy work for addressing the access and retention rates of students of color in the university. Black admissions was a major problem at my college (and still is). The year that the coalition focused on black admissions as a campaign, the incoming undergraduate class had less than 100 black students out of 4,000. In a coalition meeting, I remember my colleague from the African Student Union saying to fellow members in the room: “we are all black.” The statement was thought provoking and participating in the coalition helped me to understand that the struggle of one community is connected to the struggle of other communities.

While internally I understand the importance of cross-community solidarity, I also acknowledge that my Asian identity and being “model minority’d” are factors that affect how I am received and perceived by members of the black community. I can be proactive in my interactions with members

of the black community by acknowledging the limits of my knowledge and consciousness of the experience of being black in Portland. I might also offer up my personal story from my undergrad days of how I understand myself and my participation in “black issues.”

In addition to the racial lens offered up here, I also approach the project from a perspective that has been colored by my experience growing up middle class, learning to navigate society as a first generation daughter of immigrants, and benefiting from the knowledge afforded to me by higher education. I understand that some of these experiences may alienate me from the stories being shared by community members, and some of these experiences may build bridges. Ultimately, I recognize the ways in which I am privileged, but also acknowledge that I am responsible for finding ways that my privilege can be leveraged to support community self-determination.

### LORRIE

I am first generation, female, person of color, who grew up economically challenged. I was born and raised in Chinatown, San Francisco in a single residency occupancy apartment. I grew up in one of the most liberal cities in the country. Most of the schools I went to were predominantly Asian so I did not know what it felt like to be a minority until college. Even if my school, UC San Diego had many Asians, the major I chose was white dominated, Environmental Policy. That is when I first realized how few “American” experiences and how little knowledge I had on the environment/ sciences. Soon I realized I felt uncomfortable around white people, especially in a professional environment. Furthermore, even if I grew up in a predominantly Asian environment, one of my biggest internal conflicts that I have been dealing with my whole life is fighting off the stereotypes of an Asian female-- timid, shy, rule-follower, and stays out of everyone's way. These stereotypes dictate how I act every day in big and small ways. This lens of difference has actually magnified in Portland, the whitest major city in America. Furthermore, being who I am and learning about planning as a traditionally, white male dom-

## APPENDIX I : PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

inated field that has been involved in many policies that have discriminated against People of Color, I feel strongly in righting the wrongs of the past.

In a lot of ways, my position and the lens to which I see helps me understand issues of African and African Americans in East Portland. I understand what it feels like to be stereotyped for how I look and have certain expectations applied to me. I know what it is like to come from a background that is not the dominant one. I also feel what it means to be an immigrant and not know what the dominant culture does. To live in this minority experience means I know what it like to be considered second or not at all in planning. I can understand what it is like to sit in a room full of people who are different from you and being looked at to represent/ embody all of one ethnicity/ people of color. Furthermore, I understand what it feels like to be embarrassed of where you live and where you come from. I am empathetic to all who feel all of these things.

I also identify with those of low income who do not have access to many opportunities or material things. My family and I were renters.

This means that I can be biased towards People of Color and biased against white people. I identify with African and African Americans when they say they are being discriminated because of their race. I empathize with them when they cite a history of discrimination and distrust in government/ white people. My position means that I feel negative feelings towards white people that have dominated and set up an unequal system. Specifically for this study, in means I may sometimes ask leading questions that bias against white people. I may pursue interests that talk more about the negative of what has been done instead of the positive. This also may prevent me from being authentic if I am scared to offend. I may also persist at a document that is bottom up/ serves the community instead of a top down/ directed towards policy makers.

However, my position is also a very privileged one. I think where my position affects this project the most is the fact

that I am a person of color, but I am not Black. Therefore, even if my race has had a history of discrimination acted against us, it is not have the same as Black people. Asian Americans, or what some refer to as the “Model Minority” is a mechanism to divide People of Color, but it is a very real way people think. I need to be cognizant of how I am perceived by the Black community and not act in a way that clumps People of Color together. My experience as an Asian American varies widely than African and African Americans. In so many ways, the forces against Black people are so much stronger, none of which I will ever know what it feels like to live through. I may make certain judgements significant to my own experience, without knowing the multiple factors at play for this group of people. I may have all these beliefs for all that is possible, but they may face a different reality that I do not know. In addition, I worked in government for a few years and hold those biases as well. I know why so many procedures in place and how hard it is for government officials to appeal to and serve the masses.

## LESLEE

I am a white, middle class, female. I come from ancestors that owned slaves just outside of Jackson Mississippi. My great grandmother used to talk about growing up on the plantation in rural Mississippi and speaks fondly of their black cook. My grandmother knows the woman who wrote “The Help” and will attest to how accurately the book portrays the reality of relationships between black people and white people during this time in history.

In the 1950’s my grandparents moved to Bakersfield California where the Hispanic population was the largest minority. I grew up seeing Hispanic cleaning people, gardeners and pool boys at my grandma and grandpa’s house. While there was always a clear social class distinction between them, the “employees” were also “part of the family”; exchanging gifts around Christmas-time, knowing each other on a personal level, etc.

## APPENDIX I : PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

In my own nuclear family, my parents were both part of workers' unions; my mother in a teacher's union and my father, a pipe fitter, in a Plumbers and Steamfitters Union. They instilled liberal, working class views and values in my sister and me.

Growing up in Hillsboro, OR, Hispanics were the largest minority group represented within our community. The racism I saw at my high school was in the form of calling someone a "beaner", laughing about how the Mexicans always brought large stuffed animals and balloons to school for their significant other on Valentine's Day or tip-toeing around the fact that someone lived in an apartment versus owning a home. There were very few black people or families in my community or at my school. Living in the suburbs and being involved in a Community Church, most of my friends and people that I spent the most time with were fellow white, middle class, children of homeowners.

During undergrad at Seattle Pacific University (a small Methodist liberal arts university situated in another predominantly white city), the black students were typically recruited through an event called "Urban Preview" whereas I had been introduced to the university through an "SPU preview". I remember feeling like this was some type of institutional racism; meant to divide and segregate the student body. Why couldn't we all attend the same preview? One of my best friends from college was a charismatic black female. She was always invited to be part of marketing campaigns and her face was all over campus posters, promotional materials and on the website. She was particularly cynical of the "Urban Preview" and people-of-color orientation day. I thought that the answer was to develop color blindness and to treat everyone equally.

Through coursework in the Urban Planning Program, an internship with YWCA (Eliminating Racism. Empowering Women.), and reading Seattle's Racial Equity Toolkit I have begun to transform my mentality to recognize that color-blindness is not the answer. To be culturally competent we must recognize differences in people and communities in order to achieve social justice. Conversations with fel-

low MURPS have also broadened my perspective to see how hard and isolating it is to be to a person of color in a predominantly white environment; people need places to share, grow, and "huddle together for cultural warmth".

### D.H.

It was a genuine honor working on the People's Plan East Portland Pilot Project. I am grateful for the opportunity it presented to gain some first-hand experience in communities that live with a legacy of displacement and marginalization. As a young urban planner, I know that "gentrification" and "equity" are popular buzzwords. Spending time with the Black community in East Portland and listening to their experiences—across all aspects of life—was an extraordinary learning experience for me. I hope that our project has been helpful in some way in beginning a process of community organizing, and I hope that the plan we have written in conjunction with this community succeeds in raising the profile of the many serious challenges that come with being Black in East Portland.

My workshop team from Portland State University made a practice of reflection and critical self-examination. None of us identify as being Black, and we did our best to bring a spirit of sincere listening and willingness to engage and be helpful. While I am White, I come from a very poor family. I was raised in a town where I was a racial minority, and I have spent several years of my life in close connection with Native American peoples of the Southwestern U.S. I do not wear these experiences as a badge, though I am aware that they have done much to shape my worldview. I am ever-cognizant of the unspoken issues of class in our society, and I believe that many expressions of racism are in fact rooted in misunderstandings of cultural norms, mannerisms and idiosyncrasies of different cultural groups. Black individuals, much like Native Americans, have a very distinct, strong and unmistakably unique culture. Because our society does not engage in questions of race and class, we leave a vacuum of discomfort that can easily be filled by unfamiliar cultural expressions from "different" people,

and spark a flare bomb of discrimination and intolerance—without ever being acknowledged, fully recognized and reflected upon.

Still, I am White. I cannot begin to understand what it means to live on a daily basis with the concerns and unconscious insecurities that come with being Black in America. Listening to the Black community in East Portland helped me to genuinely acknowledge the little everyday inequities that just come along with being Black. When I genuinely reflect on these inequities of the Black experience, it is impossible not to acknowledge the unearned privileges I enjoy simply by being White.

For the Black community in East Portland, the inequities of racial discrimination are compounded by numerous geographic inequities as well. The planning and policymaking community is on watch during a broad-based suburbanization of inequity in our city. The forces of free capitalism simply keep pushing the Black, colored, poor, older, non-college educated populations further out, further away from the modern, well-connected urban cores of our cities. Right now, East Portland is the “out there” where people get pushed, but soon, it may become the next up-and-coming hip spot within the UGB. The planning and policymaking traditions have thus far done a terrible job of considering the long-term needs of people in their place. Instead, we fall in love with new stadiums, convention centers, glass-covered skyscrapers, and the cosmopolitan “university district”. Our modern urban utopias have thus far not been constructed with any dialogue around issues of class, race and systematic discrimination.

Unless a strong and decisive intervention is made for long-term equitable outcomes in our urban environment, future Portlanders may have fewer and fewer opportunities to be made uncomfortable by a person that doesn’t “look like me”; there may be fewer and fewer chances for us to practice keeping our mind clamped open in the face of what we don’t fully understand or recognize; there may be fewer and fewer opportunities to learn from other peoples’ histories and precious gems of cultural knowledge. Without

these opportunities, I don’t have much hope that equity will ever become more than a buzzword—and very popular one at that—in Portland, Oregon.

## TIM

I am a white guy from a white suburb of a white city in a white state. That is to say I was born in Portland, Oregon. I was raised in Lake Oswego, Oregon and I have lived in this state my whole life (in Lake Oswego, Salem, Eugene, and Portland, in that order). I did, indeed, grow up with limited racial diversity in my day-to-day life, a fact which might have limited my interaction with folks from other racial groups were it not for my mother and father. Despite their selection of a town to live in, my parents introduced me to a great variety of folks from various creeds, ethnic origins, and races. I traveled, friends visited, and I grew up assuming that most people had a social circle that looked different, talked different and were from different places. I was wrong. I think that became apparent during my junior year of high school when some kids from my class chanted “you can’t read” at a black student from another school during a basketball game. That incident became news, everyone at LOHS had an opinion, reporters and TV trucks came, kids got suspended. Admittedly, I struggled to see what the big deal was until my favorite teacher let the entire class have it. We were all wilfully ignorant of the implications of what was chanted and, more importantly, from whom it was coming and she was not about to let us off the hook. I didn’t walk out understanding the subtle, nuanced nature of what was wrong with what happened but it did set me down a long road of struggle with privilege, fairness and the potential historical implications of words. That struggle put Lake Oswego’s dubious distinction came into focus for me. Kids from elsewhere hated us over the actions of a few morons and I could understand why. I don’t want to paint that moment as a sort of epiphany through which I am now a perfectly race-blind individual but I definitely became much more aware of racial issues and endeavored to be more sensitive to such topics. All of this is to say that I struggle with racial nuance and I may have some blind

## EAST PORTLAND PILOT

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spots in my knowledge of interracial relations but I feel very comfortable for people of all races. Tim

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# APPENDIX II:

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUPPLEMENT



## APPENDIX II: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUPPLEMENT

A three-person Community Engagement Subcommittee of our graduate student team convened to define the details and flow of the first Community Leaders Forum. The team discussed logistics like finding a place to host; the date, time and duration of the event; how the event would be advertised; what type of beneficial and culturally relevant food and services would be needed; what the format would be; and what responsibilities each student team member would be responsible for.

### DATE + TIME

With the originally proposed Community Leaders Forum #1 fast approaching (March 7th-13th), the needed graduate student team preparation began conflicting with deadlines related to the Winter 2015 term. To better ensure that the community engagement had a successful start, our graduate student team opted to delay the Community Leaders Forum #1 date by two weeks. The revised date, Monday, March 23rd, shortened the turn around to the first public workshop on March 28th but otherwise had little impact on the pilot's broader community engagement process.

### VENUE

We found a large space operated by the Rosewood Initiative, a non-profit organization aimed at making the Rosewood area near SE 162nd and Stark “a desirable place to live, work and play” available and ideal for being able to flexibly accommodate a crowd size that we were very unsure of. While the location is in the far northeast portion of our project area - not central within it - and is also not near to the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project, it was not an ideal location.

However, it's location near the 162nd Avenue MAX station, along the #20 bus line, in a highly visible location and in an area with a higher Black population that much of the project area provided a strong rationale for using Rosewood Initiative space. In addition, our graduate student team

found few alternative venues elsewhere within the project area - David Douglas High School, which had many challenges, being one of the exceptions. The nominal rental fee charged by the Rosewood Initiative also meant that we had more budget left to meet other needs.

We originally envisioned a variety of dates and times to be as flexible with attendee's schedules as much as possible. The Community Engagement Subcommittee proposed weekday evenings for the three Community Leaders Forums and weekend afternoons for the expectedly larger community workshops. The subcommittee was most excited about attracting Sunday worshippers exiting the nearby Victory Outreach Church – a popular African American church that incidentally left its long-time home in Northeast Portland to be more accessible to increasing member presence in East Portland.

### PROMOTION

The student team advertised the first Community Leaders event with flyers that were sent to our project partners; promoted on social media, at the March 4th Equity Work Group for the Powell-Division Transit and Development Project and at the March 14th official launch of the PAALF People's Plan. Promotion of Community Leaders Forum #1 and the March 28th Public Workshop were promoted via flyers written in English and Somali and were personally distributed by graduate student team members in East Portland in the weeks leading up to each public event, as well as on the day of the events themselves.

In addition, the graduate student team created and distributed a formal press release of Public Workshop #1 to local media, elected officials and other community partners. The Office of Mayor Charlie Hales even highlighted the event via Twitter and Facebook.

## INCENTIVIZING ATTENDANCE + MAKING PUBLIC EVENT CULTURALLY RELEVANT

While a limited project budget put some constraints on the graduate student team's ability to incentivize attendance and make public events culturally relevant to Africans and African Americans, we did devote significant attention to doing so. While transit passes and travel reimbursements could not be effectively provided or fairly distributed, our student team did set aside an allowance in our budget for a nominal stipend available to individuals who could commit to actively participating as Community Leaders in all or most of the public engagement process.

In addition, we provided other incentives. We auctioned a Fred Meyer gift card at the end of each of the first two meetings. We also provided catered Somali meals from Alle Amin (511 NE 76th Ave., Portland), and had a child care provider and Somali interpreter available for the duration of the first two public events. Conveniently, the Rosewood Initiative has sinks and a counter space to set food upon, as well as a corner space with toys specifically for children.

## MEETING FORMATS

The Community Engagement Subcommittee proposed 2-1/2 hour meetings from 5:30pm to 8pm on Monday, March 23rd and Saturday, March 28th (during PSU's one-week spring break between Winter and Spring terms). They also set the date and time of Community Leaders Forum #2 from 5pm to 8pm on Thursday, April 2nd at Portland Community College, Tabor Hall – SE 82nd and Division. Our graduate student team planned to reassess our approach to the April 2nd meeting and adjust, as needed, after reviewing successes and non-successes from the first two meetings.

We planned Community Leaders Forum #1 with 30 minutes of meeting, mingling and eating, followed by personal introductions, presentations from our client and graduate student team of the PAALF People's Plan and background findings and a discussion of the East Portland Pilot process. We prepared and presented boards highlighting our findings and had large aerial maps with on-the-ground images for context and reference. Our team recorded the meetings via audio and took notes of all discussions on large note pads that all in attendance could see.

# APPENDIX III:

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## APPENDIX III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The PAALF People’s Plan and the East Portland Pilot Plan aim to advance an innovative approach to the planning process, one that is participatory, people-driven and equitable. Given these goals, it was crucial to analyze and organize the results from public engagement so that the unadulterated voice of the people emanated clearly from the results. This ethical imperative was given added importance since none of the members of the student team are Black, and thus lack direct knowledge of the multiple sources of cultural and personal meaning unique to the Black community.

As an early step in the planning process, the student team agreed to engage in reflective writing and the creation of positionality statements. We challenged ourselves at early group meetings to examine our personal privileges, blind spots, and to critically reflect how our class and racial identity has shaped our worldview and everyday assumptions. These group dialogues informed our personal reflective statements, which served as reminders as we moved forward in the public engagement and data analysis process (Please see Appendix I).

The use of recording equipment at the workshop sessions also helped to maintain transparency in the public input process. With the permission of all participants, the planning team recorded each of the workshop sessions, as well as the focus group with the Black Student Union at David Douglas High School and some of the personal interviews conducted by team members. Planning team members carefully transcribed the recordings word-for-word, leaving out inaudible sections. In addition to the recordings, other paraphrased or summarized material was also transcribed, such as writings from poster boards and notes from unrecorded meetings or interviews. A total of 169 pages of transcriptions were made from all sources listed above.

### PHENOMENOLOGY

Based on the deeply democratic goals of the EPPP

planning process, the method of phenomenology was chosen to assist in organizing, categorizing and analyzing the public input received. Phenomenology can be understood as the examination and inquiry into the structures of experience, and applying a lens of phenomenology to a project can help to elucidate how things are experienced subjectively, and the meaning they have in our everyday lives. In other words, phenomenology is not just concerned with what we experience, feel or think, but how we experience it and how such subjective experiences are driving forces in the human experience.

Phenomenology was chosen for the EPPP because there has to date been no effort to gain insight into the subjective dimensions of the post-displacement experience of Portland’s Black community. The planning and policy institutions in Portland have as yet not inquired into the subjective “structures” of the experience of displacement, cultural loss and root shock. How, in our participants’ view, are the issues confronting them generated and regenerated? Where and how do they situate themselves in these dynamics? Are they subject to broad, unchangeable forces? Are they capable agents working for change?

These questions of the subjective interpretation of experience can contribute in many ways to shaping the concrete, everyday experiences of the Black community that has been displaced from N/NE Portland. Insight into these phenomenological dimensions of experience can help to add sensitivity and strategic understanding to any planning effort seeking to engage this community. While a great deal of research has examined these questions in other places and different contexts, the planning team was committed to using the historically specific context of Portland as a basis for their work.

In a practical sense, phenomenology as a method of analysis entails a few basic steps.

- Bracketing out your own experiences;
- Entering a dialogue with individual participants;
- Identifying the major themes from the transcripts

## APPENDIX III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

relating to these conversations for thematic analysis. First, the approach of phenomenology entails “bracketing”, or taking account of all existing biases and preconceived notions surrounding the phenomena under investigation. This process of “bracketing” is accomplished through self reflection. The researcher honestly reflects on his/her previous experiences with the phenomena, and attempts to take full account of previous theoretical or academic perspectives that might inform these preconceived notions.

As mentioned earlier, the student team engaged in this type of reflection from the earliest days of the workshop project. Thus, the process of bracketing was to some extent already incorporated in our process once we decided on the phenomenology approach. The two team members that completed the data analysis undertook a more formal process of reflection together. The potential biases identified were bracketed in the form of a list, which was regularly referenced as the data analysis went on. In this way, a sincere effort was made to ensure that data analysis was completed objectively, without influence from personal bias or pre-conceived understanding.

The next step of phenomenology entails direct conversation with participants. This phase was completed through the community workshops, interviews and focus groups conducted by the student team. While the method of phenomenology does not call for a specific, formalized approach to conducting these conversations with participants, the student team attempted to allow input to flow directly from the experience of participants. In other words, whenever possible, an attempt was made to allow information to emerge organically, and without strong influence from the “seeds” of ideas planted by the student team.

Finally, after completing the transcripts from the numerous conversations we conducted with community members, we identified a framework of what appeared to be the most salient themes from this material. In identifying these major themes, the student team had to decide upon the

level of specificity at which to define the themes. If the themes were defined too specifically, there would simply be too many of them. However, themes were defined too abstractly might not yield very substantive insight during thematic analysis.

After a great deal of discussion, the student team identified major themes from the material. These themes would become the codes used during data analysis. In making the decisions as to which specific codes should be applied to specific parts of the transcripts, the student team kept track of the “bracketed” list that had been made of potential biases or pre-conceived ideas. In this way, the basic elements of phenomenology were utilized in an attempt to construct a transparent and objective process of thematic analysis, which we hoped would enable us to reflect the input of participants in an unaltered and genuine form.

## CODING

The student team applied the method of phenomenology through the coding of the material generated from the EPPP public engagement process. The practice of coding is done to identify and categorize important concepts or themes from a body of data or text. Codes are defined subjectively by the person(s) analyzing the data, and are meant to capture essential qualities and/or broad themes that emerge in the text. While the practice of coding can reduce, summarize and condense the original data into individual “units” that might not be reflective of the original text, it can also be a powerful tool for identifying commonalities and an overall “shape” that might emerge from a large body of data or text.

In the case of the EPPP, the data used for coding consisted of the transcripts made from the public engagement process. The direct, word-for-word transcripts were separated from the paraphrased transcripts so as to distinguish between what was actually said and what was just a summary of the public input received. Codes were

created after several meetings during which the project team reviewed and discussed the material from the first two workshop meetings. Codes were chosen based on what appeared to be strong “categories of meaning” from these initial workshops, and the goals and principles of PAALF People’s Plan were also taken into account in deciding upon the codes.

A set of 10 codes were decided upon, four of which were also assigned “child codes”, which were simply more specific themes within the broader categories represented by the “parent” codes. There were 7 of these child codes in total. The final set of codes used in analyzing the public input was as follows:

- Building connections to power
- Culturally appropriate services
  - Community center
  - Parks, Exercise and/or Recreation
- Education
- Food and/or Health
- Gentrification
- Housing
  - Housing quality
  - Housing supply and/or affordability
- Jobs and Economic Development
- Safety
  - Police and/or Crime
  - Safety of Place
- Sense of Place and/or Building Culture
  - Locally Unwanted Land Uses
- Transportation and/or Mobility
- Youth

The codes were also assigned a weighting system in order to help determine the quality of the input from the public. The weighting system applied was a 5-tiered scale from -2 through +2. If a given code was applied in a strongly negative context, it was assigned a weight of -2; neutral comments were assigned a weight of 0; and strongly positive comments were given a weight of +2 (Table 1).

-2	-1	0	1	2
Strongly negative	Moderately negative	Neutral	Moderately positive	Strongly positive

Table 1. Weights applied to “Categories of Meaning” Codes.

These 17 codes were designed to categorize what issues emerged from the public input process. The important question of phenomenology, however—how our participants subjectively structure their experience—could not be addressed through these codes. For this reason, a sub-set of 5 codes were created that represented “driving forces” of phenomena. By focusing on driving forces of change, it was hoped that insight could be gained regarding how participants view phenomena impacting them as being generated. Rather than relying on books, journal articles and expert opinions to learn how the issues confronting the Black community come into being, the student team recognized the opportunity to look to the people who live through the experience every day.

It was also hoped that focusing on the driving forces of change might help to reveal the degree of personal efficacy felt by participants around the major issues and topics of discussion. For instance, if a participant felt strongly capable of impacting change around an issue, it was assumed that he or she would associate it with driving forces within their capacity to impact and effect. If, on the other hand, they felt the issues were generated from broad forces well out of their ability to impact change, they might be more likely to feel a low sense of personal efficacy around the issue. While this is admittedly only one of many possible ways in which a phenomenology lens might be applied, this approach seemed best suited to the overarching goals of the EPPP.

The final list of 5 driving forces used in the coding process was as follows:

- Historical and/or Geographic Forces

## APPENDIX III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- Market Forces
- Discrimination and/or Racism
- Policy and/or Planning Forces
- Organizational Capacity

These codes for the driving forces were assigned a weighting system of 1 to 3. There was no attempt to determine whether a given driving force in a given instance was impacting either positive or negative change. Instead, the weighting system was used to show how strongly a given driving force was implicated in a given excerpt. If a factor was indirectly implied, it was assigned a weight of 1, while a weight of 3 was used when a participant unambiguously attributed change or agency to one of these 5 factors (Table 2).

1	2	3
Indirectly implied	Moderately Implied	Strongly Implied

Table 2. *Weights applied to Driving Forces Codes.*

Finally, the codes for driving forces above are listed in order of their relatedness to personal efficacy. Driving forces that are rooted in the general nature of market outcomes will likely prove very difficult to change, as will those deeply embedded historical systems or in the very geographic nature of a place. On the other hand, an issue that is thought to be impacted by organizational capacity of the individual or community will be more easily thought of as subject to change. The same is likely true of factors thought to be subject to political or planning forces, since individuals can exert some impact on such factors through participation in the political process.

Clearly, none of the codes listed above are entirely independent of each other. Issues related to mobility and travel have intimate ties to housing, jobs and many other factors, just as racial discrimination can overlap strongly with deeply rooted forces of historical discrimination. This inevitable overlap is the result of the nature of the codes selected. However, with the relatively large sample of 169 pages of transcribed material to use in coding, it appeared very likely that a clear signal would emerge from the data,

and that particularly relevant themes, experiences and perceived driving forces would emerge.

### APPLICATION OF METHODS

Two members from the planning team worked on coding the transcriptions from the public engagement process. In order to ensure that both coders were approaching the task comparably—i.e., interpreting text similarly; applying codes at a similar rate; etc.—a process was developed whereby small sections of the data were coded, after which the coders discussed their results. Through several repetitions of this process, the coders arrived at a satisfactory level of consistency.

The coders then worked in Dedoose to apply codes to the 169 pages of transcripts. A total of 1,874 codes were applied to the transcripts, with many of the codes overlapping with each other. The capabilities of the Dedoose program allowed us to examine the extent to which one code overlapped with another. We were also able to view the number of times an individual code was applied, the average weight that was assigned to the code (see above) and data regarding the coding behavior of each of the two coders. A full examination of the findings from the data analysis conducted in Dedoose is found in the following sections.

### FINDINGS

The coding was done in an online software program—called Dedoose. A total of 22 codes were created. 17 of these codes helped to categorize what participants discussed, while 5 of the codes were meant to show how they were discussed. The “what” codes describe categories of objective phenomena. The 5 “how” codes deal with the subjective experience of participants. These subjective codes were created to help tell the story of how participants understand the origins of—or driving forces behind—the issues they confront. By listening to these “origin stories”, we can better understand how the experience of displacement and root shock is understood

by those who live with its legacy every day. The use of these subjective “how” codes is grounded in the practice of phenomenology, which is described in a previous section above.

The origin stories inherent in the subjective codes can be thought of as existing on a spectrum of personal power to change (Table 3). The above listing of these subjective codes are ranked in order of personal power, or individual ability to change an issue. If the primary force driving an issue in someone’s life is their own organizational capacity,

they are likely to feel like they have a high ability to change that outcome. On the other hand, if the major driving forces are deeply rooted historical forces, or complex macroeconomic forces, an individual will be less likely to feel capable of changing the system. Thus, these 5 codes can also help to generate insight about how capable participants feel about their ability to change an issue. This knowledge is important, since areas where community members naturally feel capable of impacting change are likely to be good starting points for community actions to create “small gains” that can help build confidence and


Objective phenomena--“what” codes: Issues / Assets / Challenges	Subjective phenomena—“how” codes Driving forces / “origin stories”	High Self Efficacy  Low Self Efficacy
Building connections to power Culturally appropriate services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community center</li> <li>• Parks, Exercise / Recreation</li> </ul> Education Food and/or Health Gentrification / Displacement Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing quality</li> <li>• Housing supply / affordability</li> </ul> Jobs and Economic Development Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police / Crime</li> <li>• Safety of Place</li> </ul> Sense of Place / Building Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locally Unwanted Land Uses</li> </ul> Transportation and/or Mobility Youth	Organizational Capacity Policy / Planning Forces Discrimination / Racism Market Forces Historical / Geographic Forces	

Table 3. Spectrum of Personal Power to Change.



## APPENDIX III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

social fabric.

### CODE COUNTS

After specific sections from all 169 pages of transcripts were “tagged” with different weighted codes, the results were examined through different analysis capabilities in the Dedoose software. A total of 1,831 codes were applied in Dedoose, 633 for the subjective, “how” codes and 1,198 for the objective, “what” codes (Table 4). Two members of the planning team applied the codes after working to develop a common understanding of how codes should best be applied.

The code with the highest occurrence was that for organizational capacity (Table 4). From the standpoint of community organizing, this result is encouraging, since it

suggests that community members generally feel a sense of capability and personal empowerment with regard to the topics discussed in the workshop meetings. However, the high occurrence of this code was probably influenced by numerous interviews with advocates and community activists. Because these people work in a context where they are constantly striving to make positive change, they are likely to view the world as being subject to change by collective action. It was also clear from the workshop meetings that concerns about youth were a major priority of community members. The high scores for policy and planning forces may to some extent reflect the bias of the team, since, as students of urban and regional planning, we were more likely to perceive the issues and topics discussed through the “lens” of planning and policy forces.

In what was a surprise to the team, the topics of housing

Code counts for objective codes Issues / Assets / Challenges		Code counts for subjective codes Driving forces / origin stories	
Youth	174	Organizational Capacity	198
Building Culture / Sense of Place	153	Policy / Planning Forces	171
Culturally Appropriate Services	150	Market Forces	114
Transportation / Mobility	106	Historic / Geographic Forces	80
Education	102	Discrimination / Racism	70
Jobs / Economic Development	96		
Building Connections to Power	64		
Safety	51		
Community Center	49		
Housing	47		
Gentrification / Displacement	44		
Food / Health	41		
Parks / Exercise / Recreation	40		
Housing Supply / Affordability	28		
Police / Crime	28		
Safety of Place	12		
Locally Undesirable Land Uses	7		
Housing Quality	6		
Totals	1,198	Totals	633
<b>Overall Total</b>		<b>1,831</b>	

Table 4. Count Table for Code Application.

and gentrification / displacement were not discussed in much depth by the workshop participants and/or interviewees. This is true even though the student team introduced the topic in a number of different settings. While most discussions of gentrification and displacement focus strongly on the issue of affordable housing, the results from this analysis emphasize issues like transportation, education, and culturally appropriate services. However, it would be wrong to conclude that the topics were mentioned fewer times by participants are of least importance to them. For instance, the many ways in which Black Americans experience discrimination from police officers is currently a very prominent issue at the national scale. It is very likely that the Black community in East Portland feels that this is an important issue that needs to be addressed in some way, even though the code associated with policing does not rank high in the above data analysis. Inevitably, the decisions made by the student team about how to facilitate the meetings and/or interviews had an influence on the participants' understanding of why the meeting was taking place, which in turn was likely to influence what issues, concepts, etc. were in the forefront of the participants' minds. In other words, the context of the meetings and workshops had their own limitations, which inevitably had an influence on what participants did and did not discuss.

### CODE WEIGHT STATISTICS

In addition to “tagging” specific sections with codes, each code was given a weight, which is a measure of its relative strength or influence. The subjective (how) codes were weighted according to how strongly a given “origin story” was suggested in the data. The objective, (what) codes, meanwhile, were weighted based on whether a given issue was discussed in a negative or positive context. The weighting systems applied are summarized in Tables 1 and 2 above.

The statistics for the weight of each code help to reveal the quality of the feedback received from the community (Table 5). For instance, when the issue of discrimination

and racism did come up in the workshop and/or interview sessions, it appears to have been directly implied as an important force impacting the reality of participants. The importance of this factor is not gauged by the number of times it was discussed by participants, but by the fact that participants seem to attribute added significance when it does arise.

Even though the topic of housing quality was coded only 6 times in the entire body of data, it appears to have rarely been brought up in a positive context. The same is true of the codes for culturally appropriate services, gentrification and/or displacement, safety and police and/or crime. It thus appears clear that participants feel strongly about these issues, even though they arose fairly infrequently in the workshop / interview sessions of the EPPP. The high weight scores for building connections to power suggest that participants generally feel positively about forging connections to create change. Meanwhile, the topics of transportation and/or mobility, parks, recreation and/or exercise were coded much more frequently than housing or gentrification, but they appear to have been discussed in a mostly neutral context.

The code weights from driving forces appear to suggest that participants were generally able to identify with some clarity what factors drive change in their communities and in their personal lives. None of the average weights for driving forces have weights below “2”, suggesting that most were at least moderately implied as important driving forces by participants. The high average weights for organizational capacity suggest that participants view their own capacity and collective action as capable of impacting the issues that affect them. Meanwhile, the high average weights for planning and/or policy forces suggest that participants acknowledge that driving forces originating from arrangements in the public sector play a significant role in the outcomes they face in their everyday lives.

### CODE CO-OCCURRENCE STATISTICS

The last analysis conducted in Dedoose was that for code



	Building Connections to Power	Culturally Appropriate Services	Community Center	Parks / Exercise / Recreation	Education	Jobs / Economic Development	Housing Supply / Affordability	Culture / Sense of Place	Transportation / Mobility	Youth	Market Forces	Organizational Capacity	Policy / Planning Forces	TOTALS
Building Connections to Power												53	22	214
Culturally Appropriate Services			45	30	28	32		51		65	29	66	61	556
Community Center		45						31		28				213
Parks / Exercise / Recreation		30												183
Education		28								66		37	38	320
Jobs / Economic Development		32						31		31	50	39	30	362
Housing Supply / Affordability														191
Culture / Sense of Place		51	31			31				44	42	82	49	557
Transportation / Mobility										33	26		59	281
Youth		65	28		66	31		44	33		44	53	76	597
Market Forces		29				50		42	26	44		29	44	444
Organizational Capacity	53	66			37	39		82		53	29		48	585
Policy / Planning Forces		61			38	30		49	59	76	44	48		599
TOTALS	214	556	213	183	320	362	191	557	281	597	444	585	599	

Table 6. Code Co-Occurrence Analysis Results.

to start to build the grassroots organizing capacity of the Black community in East Portland.

Likewise, the issues that overlap strongly with the code for policy and/or planning forces may be seen by community members as requiring some form of intervention from formal governance institutions. Not surprisingly, issues of transportation and mobility were widely regarded as requiring such intervention, as were issues related to culturally appropriate services, youth and sense of place. The strong overlap between organizational capacity and policy/planning forces may indicate an opportunity to advance participatory planning and placemaking projects for the Black community in the project area.

**SUMMARY**

The practice of coding is, at the end of the day, a subjective process. Even when all precautions are taken to ensure clarity and discipline in the coding process, the decision of what to code and how to code is in the hands of the individual coders. The results from this data analysis should not be considered a completely accurate reflection of the

priorities or worldview of the community members who joined our process. They give insight into the “pulse” of a specific group of Black people living in a post-gentrification context in East Portland, and are not representative of the Black community as a whole. Furthermore, the short planning process that led to these findings represents an initial and very cursory exploration of a subject that deserves a great deal more attention.

This summary of the data analysis conducted by the student team represents only one of many ways to gain deeper insight into the feedback received from community members during the community engagement phase of the EPPP. The results from this analysis should undoubtedly be considered with a grain of salt, particularly because of the relatively short time in which this process was completed, and the fairly small group of community members that was actually engaged. Perhaps the most obvious realization that has come out of this planning process is that more extensive community engagement is needed to determine how to best prioritize actions and resources to best serve the needs of post-displacement Africans and African

APPENDIX IV: PRIORITIZATION METHODOLOGY

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## PRIORITIZATION OF ACTIONS

Chapter 3 offers a set of actions and recommendations that might serve as starting points for helping Africans and African Americans to build social and community fabric, well-being, and a sense of place in East Portland. While these recommendations were largely informed by the ongoing reflective discussions of the student team, we also felt that a formal set of criteria should be established in helping to identify which actions should be prioritized over others. These criteria are not absolute and unbending guides for prioritizing actions, but simply offer one way to consider the overall potential of a given action to bring about positive change for the Black community in the pilot area.

The student team identified a set of 6 criteria to help prioritize actions, objectives and goals for the Black community in East Portland. These criteria were decided upon through a series of group meetings, and were based primarily on the input received from the public engagement process. These 6 criteria are as follows:

1. Contribution of action / goal to the organizational capacity of the Black community in East Portland;
2. Contribution of action / goal to the (re)construction of social capital and cultural fabric for the Black community in East Portland;
3. Degree to which the action / goal emerged as a salient issue in the data analysis;
4. Availability of funding (existing and potential future sources);
5. Feasibility (“do-ability”) for the given implementer of the action;
6. Degree to which the action / goal can be integrated into existing or upcoming planning developments in East Portland.

After a list of actions was compiled from the community input received during workshop sessions, each action and/or objective was “graded” in terms of how closely it helped to fulfill each of these 6 criteria. The actions were graded on a scale of 1 to 3, with “1” meaning a weak fulfillment of the criteria, “2” meaning a moderate fulfillment, and “3” being a strong fulfillment. These scores were assigned in many cases based on our best knowledge. For instance, scores for criteria #4 (availability of funding) were not based on rigorous research of what funding sources were available for a given action, but based on our current knowledge of the planning, public policy and urban economic landscape.

However, the student team also recognized that some of these criteria were likely to be more important than others, and it was thus decided that each criteria should be given a weight. The weight of this criteria would be multiplied by its initial grade to produce the final “score” for each criteria. Weights were suggested for each criteria by members of the student team, with 5 possible weights from 1; 1.25; 1.5; 1.75; and 2. A weight of “1” means that no added importance is given to the criteria, while a weight of “2” means that that criteria is considered twice as important as that with a weight of “1”. The final weighting system decided upon is shown below (Table 1).

Criteria	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6
Weight	2.0	2.0	1.25	1.25	1.5	1.5

Table 1. Weights applied to Prioritization Criteria.

As is shown from the table above, members of the student team generally felt that the results from the data analysis overviewed in Appendix III (criteria #3) should not play a strong role in determining what actions are prioritized. Even though the analysis was done to add systematic rigor and objectivity to our planning process, it was recognized that a number of important limitations make it difficult to draw overarching conclusions from the data analysis. Perhaps if a great deal more time had been available, and if many more people had been engaged during the public input process, the data analysis could have been justifiably given more “weight” in determining priorities.

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GOAL	Objective	Criteria 1	Criteria 2	Criteria 3	Criteria 4	Criteria 5	Criteria 6	
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>							
	<b>Criteria Fulfillment Scores</b>	3	3	3	2	1	2	
	<b>Criteria Weights</b>	2	2	1.25	1.25	1.5	1.5	<b>Sum of Weighted Scores</b>
	<b>Weighted Totals</b>	6	6	3.75	2.5	1.5	3	<b>22.75</b>

Table 2. Example of the calculation of a weighted prioritization score conducted in Excel.

Indeed, it was also recognized that the very process of calculating “scores” for each action would produce exclusively numerical guides, which cannot be considered a perfect way to build a strategic roadmap for the Black community in the project area. At the end of the day, the extensive data analysis process reviewed in Appendix III offers one lens that should be carefully examined, even though it does not give a comprehensive view of the priorities of the community members we engaged. Following the scoring process, actions and/or objectives scoring relatively high were generally identified as short-term projects. Mid-range scores were identified as medium-term projects, and low scores were identified as long-term projects. Please see Chapter 3 for suggested timelines.