



# 2015 ALBERTA STREET PROJECT

## 2015 ALBERTA STREET CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

**Report Presented To**  
**Oregon Websites & Watersheds Project, Inc.**  
**World Arts Foundation, Inc.**  
**Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs, Inc.**  
**Portland Public Schools**  
**Portland Development Commission**  
**Portland Police Bureau**

**By**  
**Joshua Davis**  
**Olabode Arigbon**  
**Dominic Williams**  
**Malachi Mandley**  
**Cade May**

**Portland, Oregon**  
**October 20, 2015**



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**October 20, 2015**

## Authorization

This report has been authorized by Bob Zybach, Oregon Websites and Watersheds Project, Inc.; Michael “Chappie” Grice, World Arts Foundation, Inc.; and Deborah Gardner Moore, 2015 Alberta Street Project.

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World Arts Foundation, Inc.  
Portland, Oregon

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## Executive Summary

During the summer of 1992 six Portland, Oregon African American high school students, young men and women age 14 to 18, were employed for six weeks to research and document a comprehensive cultural resource inventory for the NE Alberta Street neighborhood. Their efforts culminated in a 150-page report containing text, maps, tables, and photographs documenting local conditions at that time and supporting their recommendations for making a better future for N.E. Alberta area residents and businesses (Gardner et al. 1992).

Now, 23 years later, the original developers of the 1992 report, Bob Zybach, Michael “Chappie” Grice and Deborah (Gardner) Moore, have worked with a new crew of African American youth – this time five young men 18 to 25 years of age – to replicate the methods used in 1992 to document current conditions along Alberta Street. The *2015 Alberta Street Cultural Resources Inventory with Recommendations* is an update and comparative analysis of changed conditions in the original Alberta Street study area a generation later – and provides a new series of recommendations that includes such current issues and concerns as neighborhood gentrification, gang violence, and “Last Thursday” cultural events.

The basic methods used to conduct this study remained the same as in 1992 -- formal and informal interviews with knowledgeable local residents and technical advisors, archival research, photographic documentation, and individual property evaluations – but technological advances in digital photography, Internet communications, and software development have greatly enhanced their efforts and results. Too, a principal research focus has shifted from local Black history to minority business and employment opportunities.

Nine local African American business leaders were interviewed during the course of this research, 483 business and residential properties were individually evaluated, new Last Thursday and Alberta Street Fair events were attended and documented, six neighborhood restaurants were reviewed, and findings were made available on a project Facebook page as a step toward creating a permanent project website for community educational and planning purposes.

Research findings show that study area business property values have increased more than 1,600% since 1992 and now exceed appraised tax values by more than three times; personal and property crimes have been markedly reduced; school enrollments have been nearly halved, with Black students being increasingly replaced by White and Hispanic students, and Asian and American Indian students



nearly eliminated; church congregations have moved or been replaced, with only five of 17 inventoried churches in the study area remaining unchanged in name and location since 1992. Black-owned businesses have been stable and have generally prospered during this time, but their economic and social influence has been greatly diminished by the influx of new, predominantly White, businesses and residents in the neighborhood.

“People” remain the most important cultural resource in the study area; businesses have nearly tripled in number from 79 to about 220; most vacant lots and buildings have been improved or developed; older homes and businesses have been refurbished; and dozens of new trees have been planted along the streets.

The crew carefully considered the original 1992 Recommendations and answers given by project interviewees before deriving a new series of prioritized recommendations for 2015: 1) support new and existing Black-owned businesses, 2) buy and retain Black-owned business and residential properties, 3) make necessary neighborhood improvements, including the development of safe local recreational areas, 4) purposefully include African Americans in community events, and 5) improve local landscaping with better planning and plant maintenance. An overarching general recommendation was also developed: to replicate the Alberta Street Project research methods in other local neighborhoods and in other cities experiencing similar problems with gentrification, social displacement, crime, poverty and unemployment.

## Acknowledgements

The 2015 Alberta Street Project was made possible by a number of individuals and organizations. In particular, the following people and organizations were critical to the success of this year's research:

Sam Brooks, Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs;

Carole Smith, Cheryl Pitman, Marita Ingalsbe, Anthony Prior, Eric Williams, Samara Fuzi, and Bre Reck, Portland Public Schools;

Amy Fleck Rosete, Kate Deane, and Tom Kelly, Portland Development Commission;

Carol Campbell, Diallo Lewis, Luke Wisher, and Wayne Curtin, U.S. Grant High School, Portland;

Kimberlee Sheng, Deanna Whaley, and Marshawna Williams, Black United Fund of Oregon;

Barbara Timper, Heather Ficht, Mario Odighizuwa, and John Gardner, WorkSystems, Inc.

Other individuals and organizations that were also very important to the successful completion of this project include (in mostly alphabetical order):

Donny Adair, African American Hunting Association; Rukaiyah Adams, Meyer Memorial Trust; Elorina Aldamar and Scott Rook, Oregon Historical Society; Will Bennett, Friends of the Golden West; Ben Berry, Airship Technologies Group; Marnella Bingham, Courtesy Janitorial Service; Terrell Brandon, Terrell Brandon Barber Shop; Simone Brooks, Brooks Staffing, Inc.; Maria Cahill, Green Girl Land Development Solutions, LLC; Wayne Cannon, Cannon's Rib Express; Ron Craig, Astoria International Film Festival; Melissa Darby, Lower Columbia Research and Archaeology; Sho Dozono, Spirit Mountain Community Fund; Eric Engstrom & Nan Stark, Portland Bureau of Planning; Ime Etuk, LCL Entertainment; Ralph Evans, Coalition of Black Men; Nick Fish, City of Portland Commissioner; Maxine Fitzpatrick, Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, Inc.; Bernie Foster, *The Skanner*, Inc.; Lew Frederick, Oregon State Representative; Harvey Garnett, Alameda Theater; Wayne Giesy and Sue Miller, Oregon Websites and Watersheds Project, Inc.; Luke Griffin, *Concordia News*; Jeff Gruen, Hewlett

Packard Co.; Ernest Harris, New Rose City Cab Co.; Michelle Harris, NW Office Liquidators; Nate Hartley, Nate Hartley Oil Co.; Roy Jay, African American Chamber of Commerce; Ebonie Johnson, Radiah Technologies Group; Nick McCarty, ToPa 3D; Lawrence O'Dea, Kevin Modica, Chris Uehara, and Aubrey Lindstrom, Portland Police Bureau; Sandra McDonough, Portland Business Alliance; Saan Patterson, Portland Artist; Tiffani Penson, City of Portland; Chino Philabaum, New Seasons Market; Jerome Polk, JP's Custom Picture Framing and Gallery; Bill Prows and Jorge Guerra, Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs; Bob Quillin and Vanessa Morgan, V&B Philanthropy; Bernadette Scott, Coast Industries, Inc.; Kenyatta Trice, Brooks Staffing; Mark Washington and Donovan Smith, *The Portland Observer*; Steve Wilent, Mt. Hood Community College; Sara Wittenberg, Alberta Main Street; Courtney Wright, School House Supplies

As can be seen, this project has depended upon the time and resources of a large number of individuals and institutions in order to be a success. We apologize to anyone we may have inadvertently overlooked, and sincerely thank everyone who made the project possible.

## Preface

*“If you can’t be a highway... be a trail.”*

The 2015 Alberta Street Cultural Resource Inventory represents a surprising and contemporary story. The story of young men, often classified as vulnerable, at-risk, and even an endangered species, came to life in this summer youth employment project using writing, culture-rich interviews, comparative photography, data collection, synthesis, choropleth mapping, geography, and the scientific method. The result, offered here, is a hyper-authentic chronicle comparing identical demographic variables and real-life testimony from 1992 with that of 2015, along NE Alberta Street in Portland, Oregon.

The initial study: *1992 Alberta Street Cultural Resource Inventory with Recommendations* (Gardner et al. 1992) chronicles the blight, disrepair, and despair of a low-income neighborhood, and concludes with recommendations that have proven to be powerfully relevant to education, economic, business and housing development, community planning and public safety.

Fast forward to 2015. Change is inevitable. What is not so inevitable is for a small team of African American young men, between high school and starting college to be employed, paid wages to carefully collect data, interview elders, photograph buildings and integrate findings into a report of this magnitude.

The emerging frontiers of what had been labeled “urban renewal” points to new research opportunities for the National League of Cities’ *Black Male Achievement Initiative* in Charlottesville, Chicago, Fort Wayne, Jacksonville, Louisville, Milwaukee, Oakland, Omaha, Orlando, and Philadelphia -- as well as Portland. Rukaiyah Adams, Chief Investment Officer for a major philanthropic entity, colored the reliable methodology by requiring a new set of questions and assumptions:

Gentrification is *not* the problem. Remember, once upon a time, some farmland near Anaheim was converted to . . . Disneyland. No, gentrification is *not* the problem. The problem is . . . people pretending that they did not understand the coming ‘unintended consequences.’ They knew very well, even if it was not labeled ‘gentrification.’ Not only were the effects known. It is what investors anticipated.

The 2015 Alberta Street Project is a must read; a rich story told by inner-city youth using applied scientific method at the community level; an authentic narrative graced with quotes, photographs and tables to make it compelling and important. If there is to be a legacy for this project it is this *Blueprint for Action* . . . this guidebook for any community that strives to better understand its history in the context of our own American cultural milieu -- and engage youth with “the greatest need” in meaningful employment.

Michael “Chappie” Grice  
September 18, 2015

# 2015 ALBERTA STREET CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

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## **Introduction**

During the summer of 1992 six Portland, Oregon African American high school students, young men and women age 14 to 18, were employed for six weeks to research and document a comprehensive cultural resource inventory for the Alberta Street neighborhood. Their efforts culminated in a 150-page report containing text, maps, tables, and photographs documenting local conditions at that time and supporting their recommendations for making a better future for NE Alberta Street area residents and businesses (Gardner et al. 1992).

Now, 23 years later, the original developers of the 1992 report, Bob Zybach, Michael “Chappie” Grice and Deborah (Gardner) Moore, have worked with a new crew of African American youth – this time five young men 18 to 25 years of age – to replicate the methods used in 1992 to document current conditions along Alberta Street. The 2015 Alberta Street Cultural Resources Inventory is an update and comparative analysis of changed conditions in the original Alberta Street study a generation later – and provides a new series of recommendations that includes such current issues and concerns as neighborhood gentrification, gang violence, and “Last Thursday” cultural events.

### **General Description of Project**

Since the creation of the original report to the present time there have been significant changes in both the Alberta Street neighborhood and in the technologies and methods of communication routinely used by students today. The 1992 report was created with a single computer, a camera, a tape recorder, a “landline” telephone and a copier; today’s student researchers routinely used email, internet search engines, websites, and portable telephones with digital cameras and video recorders — most of which didn’t even exist in 1992 – to conduct and document their research.

There were two principal objectives in doing the original 1992 report: 1) to provide a meaningful employment experience for N/NE Portland African American students that would give them enhanced technical and communications skills for improving individual academic and employment opportunities; and 2) to produce a valuable and useful tool for local residents, educators and community planners that can be used to help achieve the authors’ recommendations for attaining desired future conditions in the Alberta Street and greater Portland communities.

With these modern tools focused on replicating established scientific methods and

conducting field research, project participants have produced a new series of recommendations to better serve current and future Alberta Street businesses and residents. This report is testament to that effort.

## **Purposes of Project**

The four primary reasons for the completion of this project and the creation of this report in 2015 remain identical, word for word, with the “Purposes of Project” listed on page 1 of the 1992 Report (Gardner et al. 1992: 1):

- 1. The systematic identification and recording of valuable community resources as a first step toward the physical and cultural improvement of the Alberta Street neighborhood.*
- 2. The recognition of entrepreneurial, business, employment, recreational, and educational opportunities associated with neighborhood improvement and maintenance projects.*
- 3. The accumulation of new information regarding African American history and cultural values in Portland, Oregon.*
- 4. The creation of documentary evidence that demonstrates the scholastic and technical accomplishments of the project's participants.*

For 2015 we have added a fifth purpose for replicating this study, one that could not even be envisioned 23 years ago: The creation of a permanent Alberta Street Project website that provides permanent and ready access for students, educators and community planners to information that has been accumulated during the course of this study, including videotapes, transcripts, photographs, and a digital reference library.

A sixth purpose for conducting this study might also reasonably be listed – to inspire the participants in this project, the readers of this report, and the users of the project website, to improve their own lives and their own communities in such a way that others will also be inspired to make similar improvements for themselves and their communities. Although he was talking directly to the authors of this report, and although he was being specific to the fields of science and technology, Ben Berry (Fig. 2.1; Table 2.1) said it this way:

I'm on a personal mission to get folks who look like me and sound like me energized by science and technology, just like I was energized by my father, who was a Tuskegee airman. Many of us are not represented in the high-paying jobs in science and technology because we have not looked at those jobs as being something we could do ourselves, especially when there are not that many mentors around that look and sound like us. We start to think that those jobs aren't for us. That's why the Alberta Street Project is important to me. It's getting me in front of folks who I can inspire in science in technology, and then have you guys do the same thing when it's your time to do the inspiring.

## **General Description of the Neighborhood**

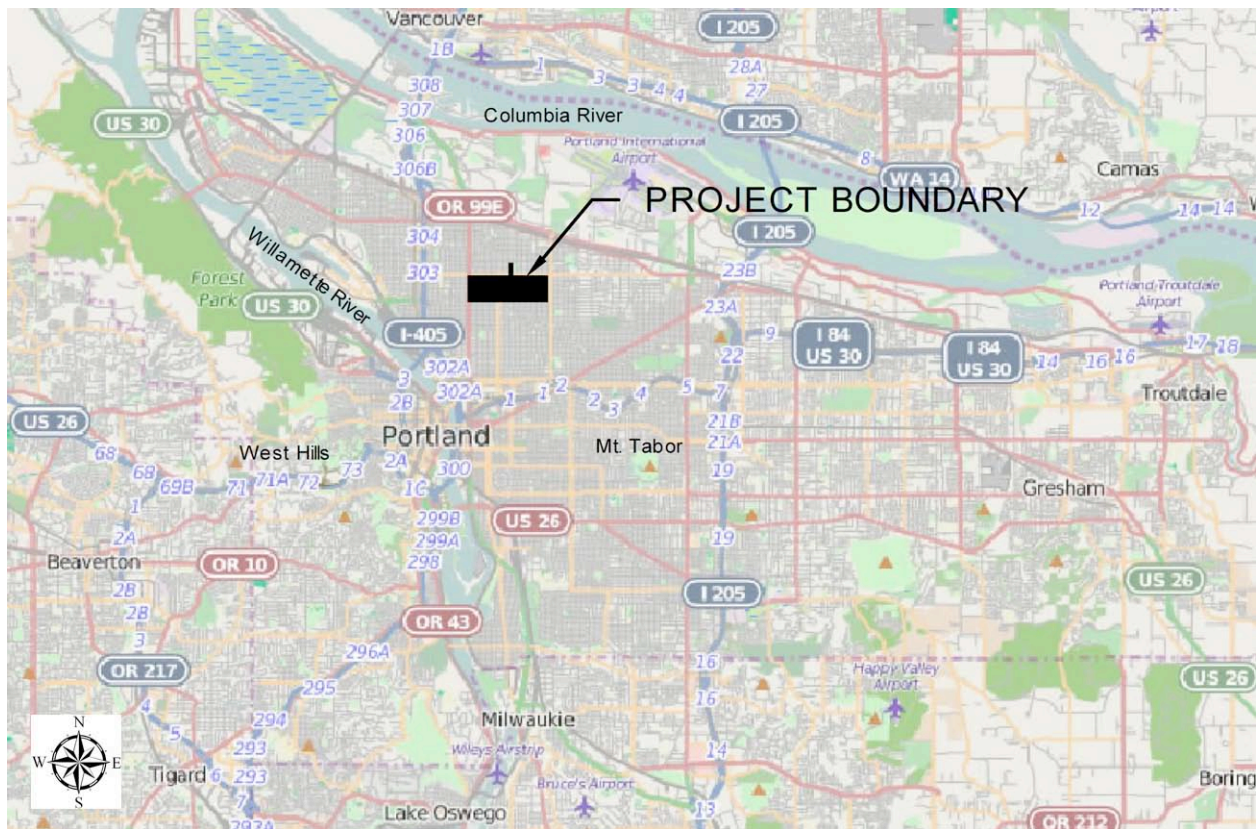
The focus of our study is the NE Alberta Street neighborhood in N/NE Portland, Oregon (Map 1.1). This area is bounded on the west by NE Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (MLK Blvd.); on the south by NE Prescott Street; on the east by NE 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, and on the north by NE Killingsworth Street and including Alberta Park. Within these boundaries we describe people, places, structures, trees, events, businesses, employment opportunities and other resources that are important to the local community.

These are the same boundaries and resources that were catalogued in 1992, but now we are also concerned with changes that have occurred within the study area since that time. The following descriptions *in italics* are quoted directly from the 1992 Report, and the following paragraphs – without italics – describe conditions as they now exist:

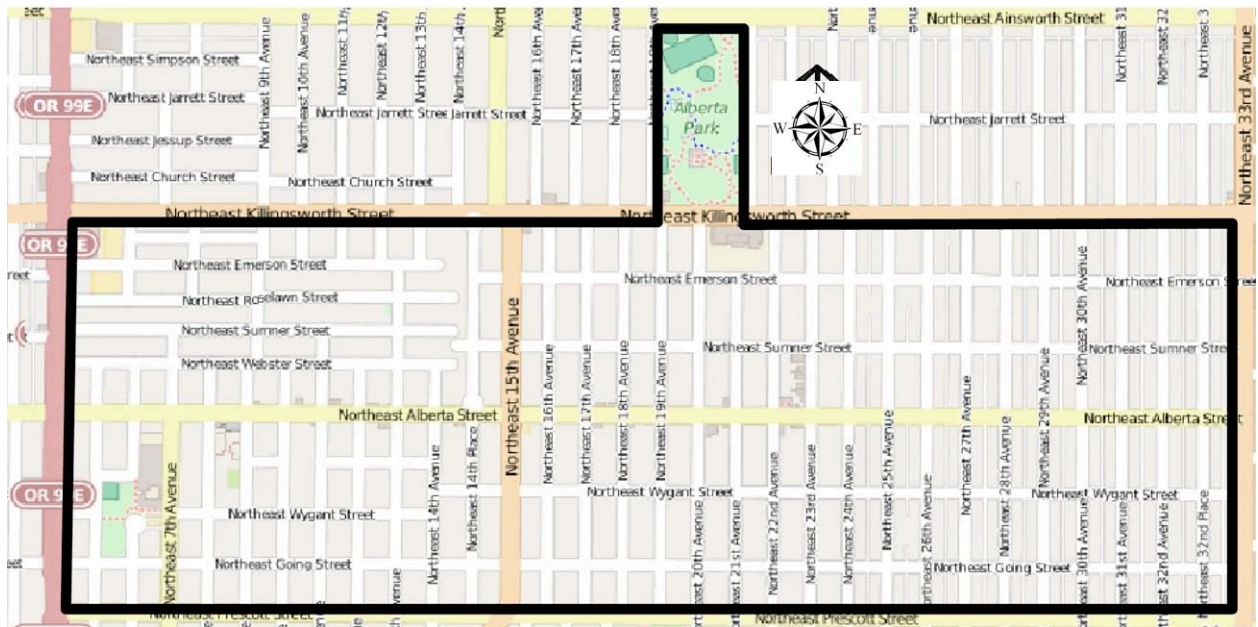
*1992: The schools we took pictures of are Vernon and King Elementary. Vernon School is located on NE 7th & Killingsworth, and King Is on NE 8th & Alberta. Around these schools are shrubs, trees and a few flowers. There are over 20 churches and houses of worship in the area, many needing landscaping, or landscape maintenance.*

2015: Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School (see Table 4.8) and Vernon Elementary School (Table 4.9) still exist in the study area, and in the same buildings, but now their enrollment figures are about ½ of what they were in 1992, and with significant demographic changes in their Black, White, and Hispanic populations. A total of 17 churches were documented in the study





**Map 1.1. 1992-2015 Alberta Street Project Vicinity Map**



**Map 1.2. 1992-2015 Alberta Street Project Study Area**

area in 1992 (Table 4.12), but only five of those churches have remained the same since then, five have adopted new names and congregations, and the remaining seven are either vacant, been demolished, have been converted to businesses or residences, or could not be relocated.

*1992: There are many homes where people live, as well as houses that are vacant and boarded up in the neighborhood. Between the lived-in and vacant houses lie vacant lots that are filled with wild flowers, trees, brush, grass, litter and garbage. The crew members observed this and decided where there are empty lots there should be new homes or businesses built, or the lots should be cleared up for recreation, gardens or neighborhood beauty.*

2015: Houses that were boarded up and vacant and which invigorated the original study are significantly reduced in number, are refurbished, and comprise the core of the gentrification issue: housing stock that has been transformed in a pattern that results in displaced families and less affordable housing for sale or rent. Vacant lots have been purchased by speculators and developers in intervening years as local property values have skyrocketed (see Table 4.1). An apparent majority of these boarded up buildings and vacant lots have been developed into new homes and businesses, apartment complexes and at least one community garden on NE Emerson Street. Neighborhood garbage and litter problems (e.g., see Fig. 4.8) have largely been eliminated as a result.

*1992: We also saw how many buildings and houses in the Albina neighborhood are very old, and they need to be remodeled. In front and around the homes (such as on the streets and -sidewalks) litter is a problem. Barking dogs scare children and visitors. Gangs stay in some places, and crime is a problem.*

2015: The things that often characterize poor neighborhoods -- dilapidated housing, litter, crime, unkempt lawns and streets, barking dogs, etc. -- likewise defined the Alberta Street neighborhood in 1992. Now, the dogs are leashed, the streets are clean, litter and garbage have been greatly reduced, homes are painted, and residents are much safer and more secure. And local ordinances prohibit barking dogs and violating owners are cited.

The Black- and other minority-owned business owners admit that they have prospered with the “rising tide,” but share that the sense of community that once existed has slowly but surely evaporated. Now neighborhood residents, of all backgrounds, report new people tend to disregard the prevailing customs of

community and the value of relationships. Residential parking has become a premium and adds to a mild tension between new and longer-term residents. Over time, everyone will likely become less impersonal, but displaced residents do resent the “wealth transfer” that is the end product of gentrification. Even with municipal plans to construct more “affordable” housing simply means that people who once were owners and have been “priced out” will be invited back into their community to be renters . . . at much higher prices. Policy-makers and planning departments will have a harder time pretending that the effects were unanticipated or “unintended.”

*1992: The main Black-owned businesses, like Sevier & Sons, Coast Janitorial, Texan II, and the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs are most influential in the community because these businesses have been around for many years. They are some of the oldest African American businesses in Portland and in Oregon.*

2015: Several of the Black-owned businesses noted in 1992 still exist, including Coast Industries, Inc. and Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs, and the total number has remained surprisingly stable (see Table 4.2). These are still among the most influential businesses on Alberta Street, but the much greater number of mostly White-owned businesses that have become established in the area since 1992 have largely diminished their relative importance (Table 4.3).

*1992: Project Alberta has assembled some statistics for the business district along Alberta Street (Appendix C). Of the 211 parcels surveyed, there were 79 businesses, 81 residences, 29 vacant buildings, and 19 vacant lots. 91% of the parcels are zoned Commercial. Opportunities for landscaping, construction, remodeling, property maintenance, and other businesses are obvious.*

2015: There are now more than 200 businesses along Alberta street -- nearly three times as many as existed in 1992. Few buildings or lots remain vacant, and many of these are used commercially to house food carts, dining areas, or parking and vendor spaces during events such as Last Thursdays and Alberta Street Fair. Business and job opportunities still remain for the listed occupations, but are far more limited in number than in 1992 (see Part V. “Local Business and Employment Opportunities”).

## Part II. Methods

By Bob Zybach

The principal intent of the 2015 Alberta Street Project was to replicate the research methods of the *1992 Alberta Street Cultural Resource Inventory with Recommendations* (Gardner et al. 1992: 5-8) as nearly as possible, so that a comparative analysis could be made of the findings of the two studies.

A major difference between 1992 and 2015 is the advancement of technology during the past 23 years: in 1992 our research equipment was limited to a single 35 mm. camera, a single photocopier, one “landline” telephone, one portable tape recorder, and a computer – for seven student researchers. This year student researchers were each assigned an individual computer and an iPhone and provided with a wide array of useful software to operate the equipment and produce digital files to document their observations and evaluations. A similarity between the two years is that students were required to do most of their research in only six weeks, and by working only four days a week, due to funding restrictions.

The design of this project is intentionally scientific so that students can become familiar with basic scientific research methods by making and documenting field observations, arranging their data into identifiable patterns, and analyzing those patterns in order to make reasoned conclusions and recommendations. The basic model for these tested methods has been my own academic research during my interdisciplinary studies at Oregon State University in the fields of geographically-based oral histories (Zybach 1999: 18-64) and regional historical ecology (Zybach 2003: 52-130).

In addition to major changes in technology, other key differences between the 1992 and current studies include variations in field crew size and makeup, the addition of a comparative analysis component to the project, and a change in research focus from African American history of N/NE Portland to documenting gentrification of the Alberta Street study area that had taken place since 1992. Crews were still comprised of local African American young adults, but in 1992 four of the six researchers were women and five of the six were still in High School; whereas in 2015 all of the five researchers were young men, all were High School graduates or had acquired GEDs, and four of the five had just graduated this year. Another difference in the two crews was that 1992 members were more reliable (with two exceptions in each instance) and more, on average, academically advanced than the 2015 crew.

## Sources of Information

The primary sources of information for this 2015 study have been the original 1992 Alberta Street Report (“the 1992 Report”), a 1991 “Project Alberta” report on Alberta Street businesses made by the Portland Development Commission (PDC) at the request of Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs (OAME) that focused on the commercial properties along Alberta Street (PDC 1991), the local African American business people we interviewed (Table 2.1), those we consulted for technical advice and information (Table 2.2), and Internet websites – particularly those established by the City of Portland (“Portland Maps”) and by Google Maps and Google Search.

In addition to these primary sources of information, an Excel file of current businesses along Alberta Street provided by the Alberta Main Street organization, relevant news media articles, and City of Portland websites containing archived crime statistics and school enrollment data were also very helpful.

## Archival Research

Relatively little archival research was conducted during the compilation of this research due to time constraints and Internet search capabilities. Instead, current crew members primarily relied on research conducted by the 1992 crew and reproduced their historical findings as “Part III” of the current report.

A key piece of new historical information we used was the 1991 two-volume business research report produced by PDC (PDC 1991) in response to a direct request from Sam Brooks (Fig. 5.1), founder of OAME. Brooks provided the project with his own copies of the report, including his personal annotations. Volume I is a nearly complete listing of all business properties along Alberta Street during 1991, stretching from MLK Blvd. to 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. The listing included vacant buildings and vacant lots, their legal descriptions, the landowners’ names and addresses, and the current (1991) market values for each property. These numbers can be found in Tables 4.1 and 4.3. Volume II contained photographs and addresses of most of the properties listed in Volume I. Both volumes were scanned for eventual online display, and several of the photographs appear in this report as Repeat Photographs (e.g., see Fig. 2.4).

Oregon Historical Society research librarians also provided updated digital versions of the illustrations used in the 1992 Alberta Street Report.

## Formal Interviews

In 1992 each student was required to conduct and record two formal interviews: one with a local African American who had formerly lived in Vanport, and one with a local child  $\frac{1}{2}$  their (the interviewer's) age. A total of 10 interviews were made and recorded in this manner, but never transcribed. In 2015, due to circumstances, it was decided to formally interview nine adult members of the Portland African American business community (Table 2.1) -- six of whom have direct ties to Alberta Street businesses within the study area -- in lieu of replicating the children's interviews.

**Table 2.1. 2015 Alberta Street Project Interviewees & Business Affiliations**

Interviewee	Affiliation	Birthdate	Birthplace	Oregon
Rukaiyah Adams	Meyer Memorial Trust	1973	Berkeley, CA	1973
Ben Berry	Airship Technologies Group	1958	Kansas City, KS	1973
Marnella Bingham	Courtesy Janitorial	1955	Portland, OR	1955
Terrell Brandon	Brandon's Barbershop	1970	Portland, OR	1970
Sam Brooks	OAME	1947	Bales, TN	1969
Simone Brooks	Brooks Staffing	1975	Portland, OR	1975
Wayne Cannon	Cannon's Rib Express	1940	Oklahoma, OK	1992
Ernest Harris	New Rose City Cab Co.	1959	Houston, TX	1967
Bernadette Scott	Coast Industries, Inc.	1958	Portland, OR	1958

Interviewees were first asked to sign a form (Appendix A) allowing their image and words to be used for research and education purposes. They were then asked the same series of questions that were used in 1992 (Appendix B), but slightly modified in order to introduce the topics of gentrification, relative prevalence of crime, and Last Thursdays, which had become important local issues in the intervening years. Interviews were conducted by a single member of the crew, who was then responsible for sending an email thank you note on behalf of the entire crew to the person they had interviewed. In addition to learning a basic professional courtesy, crew members were also consciously establishing a personal network of local experts and business people that might prove helpful in their future academic and professional endeavors. Interviews were videotaped on a minimum of two iPhones for documentary purposes, with steps being taken to eventually have transcriptions made and put online via the project website:

[www.orwww.org/Alberta\\_Street\\_Project](http://www.orwww.org/Alberta_Street_Project)

Fig. 2.1 shows the Alberta Street Project crew, comprised of (L-R) Bode Arigbon, Malachi Mandley, Domo Williams, and Joshua Davis, interviewing Ben Berry, following his presentation on state-of-the-art drone technology. In the background





**Fig. 2.1. 2015 Alberta Street Research Crew Interview Ben Berry.**

is Project Supervisor, Deborah Moore (photograph by Michael Grice). All interviews took place during July and August 2015 in a Grant High School classroom converted to a research lab for purposes of this project.

### **Technical Assistance**

In addition to the formal interviews, local experts in a variety of fields made several presentations during the course of research specific to this research (Table 2.2). Formal presentations were given at the Grant HS lab and others took place in conjunction with walking tours and during field research in the study area, in SW Portland, at Alberta Park and at Kelley Point Park (see Part V).

Individual crewmembers were also assigned to write thank you emails to each of the presenters on behalf of the entire crew, thereby further expanding each crewmember's network of personal and professional contacts. Several consultants remained in contact with the crew and also provided helpful information and direct assistance at key times following their presentations.

**Table 2.2. 2015 Alberta Street Project Technical Consultants & Business Affiliations**

Name	Affiliation	Specialty
Donny Adair	African American Hunting Association	Outdoor Recreation
Elorina Aldamar	Oregon Historical Society	Historical Research
Will Bennett	Friends of the Golden West	Local History
Maria Cahill	Green Girl Land Development Solutions	Auto-CAD Mapping
Ron Craig	Astoria International Film Festival	Black History
Melissa Darby	Lower Columbia Research & Archaeology	Local Archaeology
Sho Dozono	Spirit Mountain Community Fund	Fundraising
Eric Engstrom	Portland Bureau of Planning	Community Planning
Wayne Giesy	Oregon Websites & Watersheds Project, Inc.	Local History
Ime Ituk	LCL Entertainment	Videography
Jeff Gruen	Hewlett-Packard Co.	Website Design
Nate Hartley	Nate Hartley Oil	Local Businesses
Marita Ingalsbe	Portland Public Schools	Technical Services
Nicholas McCarty	Topo 3-D	GIS Mapping
Kevin Modica	Portland Police Bureau	Public Safety
Steve Wilent	Mt. Hood Community College	Forestry

## Internet Research

Much of the preliminary research prior to field documentation was conducted using Google Maps to locate addresses on both the 1991 and 1992 reports, to make preliminary evaluations of each location, and to construct individual files for each structure in the study area. Again, due to time constraints, field verification (“ground-truthing”) was not possible for all locations as initially planned, so the Google Map evaluations were substituted for many of the entries used to construct the choropleth maps (Maps 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3) in Part V “Local Business and Employment Opportunities” of this report.

The City of Portland “Portland Maps” website was used to determine current market and tax assessment values of business properties on Alberta Street within the study area (see Tables 4.1 and 4.3), and Google Search was used to obtain specific information regarding businesses, individuals, and historical information. This information was then entered into Excel files (Fig 2.3), which are the primary source of data and formatting for the Tables assembled for this report.

The City of Portland also maintains website archives for the Portland Police Bureau and for Portland Public Schools and these were primary sources of information regarding historical school enrollment figures and crime statistics.

## Field Observation, Documentation & Evaluation

In 1992 student researchers visited every single location in the study area as they mapped schools, churches, historical buildings and vacant lots. These maps, along with photo documentation of many of the buildings, were included in their 1992 Report. This year plans had been to also visit each location, but a lack of time and a reduced crew size resulted in the decision to focus on just Alberta Street, MLK Blvd., and a number of the avenues -- primarily 7<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, and 33<sup>rd</sup> -- as a concentrated sampling and demonstration of this method.

On a more specific level, crewmembers were asked to quantify five qualitative assessments of work opportunities for each of the street addresses that they inventoried, both business and residential. Over 600 locations were evaluated in this manner, about 2/3 of which were inventoried in the field and the remaining 1/3 in the lab via virtual evaluations on Google Maps. The five assessments given numerical values were labeled Paint, Repair, Landscape, Trees, and Streets, and each consideration was given a 0, 1, 2, or 3 grade, depending on potential work opportunities at each site:

0 = Not Applicable. Site does not contain painted surfaces, trees, etc.

1 = Site contains listed attribute, but it is in good condition.

2 = Site contains listed attribute, but maintenance or repair is needed.

3 = Site contains listed attribute, and immediate attention is needed.

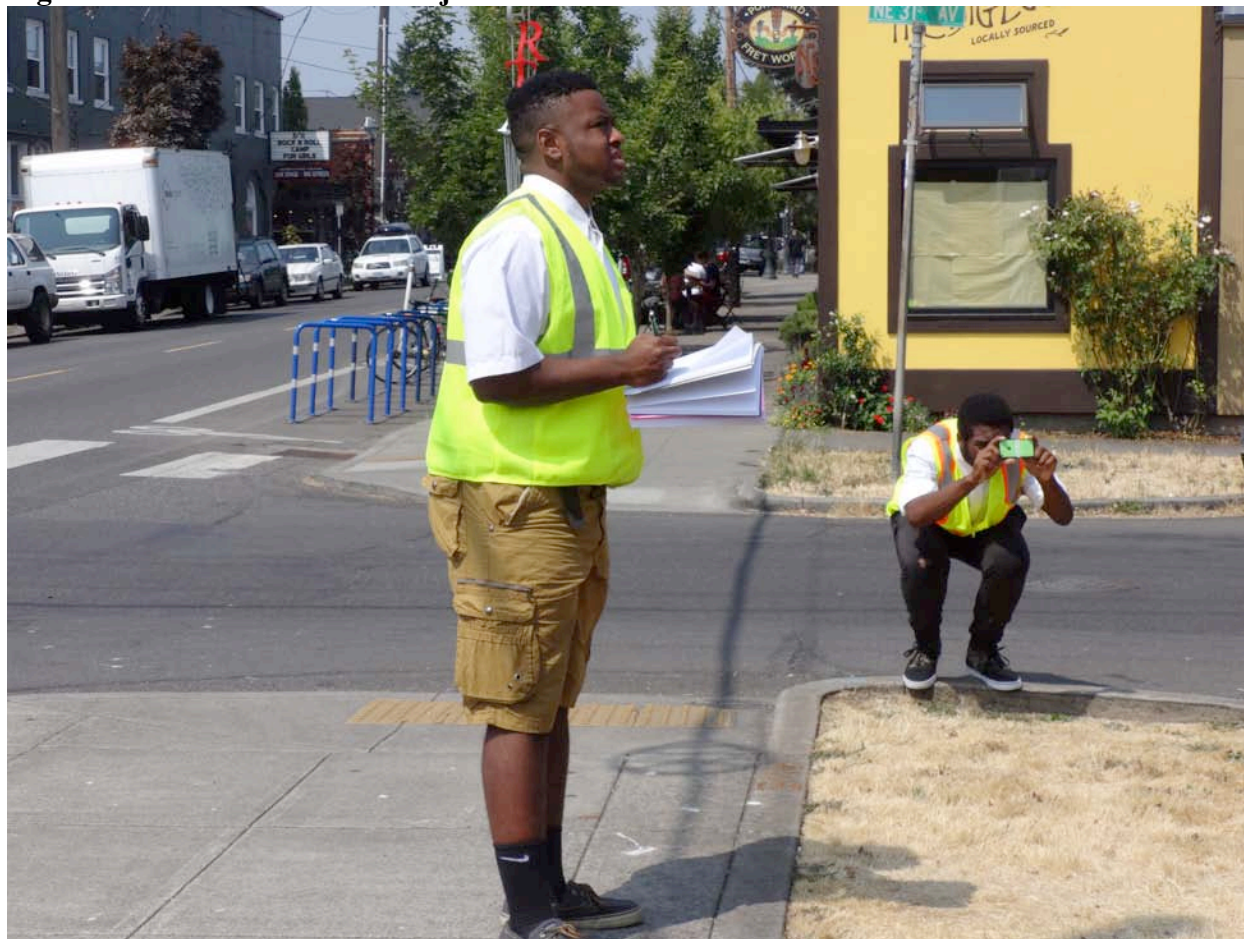
“Paint,” referred to whether a structures was in need of painting, with house painting job opportunities being considered; “Repair” referred to needs for light carpentry or construction; “Landscape” referenced lawn mowing, weeding, and shrub pruning needs; “Trees” referenced tree planting, maintenance, pruning, or removal options; and “Streets” concerned needed sidewalk and street repairs – often a result of damage from overgrown trees. These options were considered for two basic reasons: 1) they represented potential entry-level job or business formations not requiring an academic degree and only a minimum amount of equipment, and 2) good paying jobs could be obtained through existing businesses, new business formations, or by simply going door to door and requesting work from individual landowners or renters.

All attributes used these numbers except Trees, which only used 0's, 2's and 3's. The reason for this is that all trees observed were in need of some form of maintenance, whether being new plantings requiring weeding, watering and protection, older trees needing pruning or treatment for bugs or diseases, or

trees growing into powerlines, damaging streets and/or sidewalks or threatening homes by their size and location. In addition, it was agreed that almost all trees needed seasonal maintenance for any or all of the above reasons and for routine fall leaf gathering, weather-related litter fall, etc.

Documentation and evaluation of each address was typically made in the field by two separate crew member groups, one taking photos and assigning numbers from one side of the street (Fig. 2.2) and the other crew members doing the same from the other side of the street; thereby producing two sets of numbers and photos for each address for comparison from two different perspectives. Photos were then downloaded into individual file folders (one for each street address) on crewmembers' computers, and assigned evaluation numbers were then entered – after considering both sets – into Excel spreadsheet files (see Fig. 2.3).

**Fig. 2.2 2015 Alberta Street Project Field Research Crew**



Once field evaluations had been made and the data entered into Excel files, they were examined for errors and discrepancies. This was a bigger problem than



anticipated because there were numerous changes and discrepancies in address numbers between 1992 and 2015, and between datasets provided by City of Portland, used by Google Maps, documented in the field, or obtained from other sources. This reduced the number of useable evaluations from more than 600 to a total of 512. The revised entries were then submitted to Nicholas McCarty (Table 2.2), who had agreed to transform the data into choropleth maps, and subsequently further reduced to 483 total entries by eliminating 27 more problematic addresses.

**Fig. 2.3 Sample Field Evaluation Data Entered on Excel File**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Street	Number	Repair	Paint	Landscape	Trees	Streets	Type of Business	Name of Business
106	Alberta	2140	1	1	0	3	1	Retail - Yarn Store	<a href="#">Close Knit</a>
107	Alberta	2203	1	1	0	0	1	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">Ciao Vito</a>
108	Alberta	2204	1	1	0	2	1	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">Pine State Biscuits</a>
109	Alberta	2210	1	1	0	2	1	Food Cart	<a href="#">Sip Juice Bar</a>
110	Alberta	2215	1	1	0	0	1	Health, Wellness Services & Alternative Care	<a href="#">Sun Gate Studio</a>
111	Alberta	2217	1	1	0	2	1	Coffee/Tea Shops & Bakeries	<a href="#">Back to Eden Bakery</a>
112	Alberta	2223	1	1	0	0	1	Coffee/Tea Shops & Bakeries	<a href="#">Townshends Teahouse</a>
113	Alberta	2224	1	1	0	0	1	Tattoo Shop	<a href="#">Optic Nerve Arts</a>
114	Alberta	2225	1	1	0	0	1	Health, Wellness Services & Alternative Care	<a href="#">Body Aware Massage</a>
115	Alberta	2230	1	1	0	0	1	Retail - Clothing	<a href="#">Amelia</a>
116	Alberta	2231	2	2	2	2	1	Food Cart	<a href="#">23rd &amp; Alberta Food Carts</a>
117	Alberta	2236	1	1	0	0	1	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">Hana by Sushi Hana</a>
118	Alberta	2303	2	2	2	2	1	Retail - Gifts	<a href="#">Habromania</a>
119	Alberta	2315	1	3	1	2	1	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">The Knock Back</a>
120	Alberta	2338	1	1	0	2	1	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">Cruzroom</a>
121	Alberta	2403	2	1	0	2	1	Coffee/Tea Shops & Bakeries	<a href="#">Just Bob</a>
122	Alberta	2407	1	1	0	0	1	Retail - Clothing	<a href="#">The Pencil Test</a>
123	Alberta	2415	1	2	0	0	1	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">Alleyway Café &amp; Bar</a>
124	Alberta	2417	1	1	1	2	1	Hair Salons & Barber Shops	<a href="#">All Teased Up Hair Studio</a>
125	Alberta	2525	2	1	0	0	1	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">Halibuts</a>
126	Alberta	2529	1	1	0	0	1	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">Enzo's Caffè Italiano</a>
127	Alberta	2531	1	1	0	0	1	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">Mae Ploy Thai Cuisine</a>
128	Alberta	2616	1	1	0	2	2	Hair Salons & Barber Shops	<a href="#">Tastemakers Salon</a>
129	Alberta	2624	1	1	1	2	2	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">Waffle Window</a>
130	Alberta	2635	1	1	0	2	2	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">Thai Noon</a>
131	Alberta	2640	2	1	0	2	2	Health & Fitness	<a href="#">West Coast Fitness</a>
132	Alberta	2641	1	1	0	0	1	Retail - Clothing	<a href="#">Suite 6 Boutique</a>
133	Alberta	2703	1	1	2	0	2	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">The Station</a>
134	Alberta	2712	2	1	0	0	1	Restaurants & Bars	<a href="#">Neko Asian Grill</a>

Once the Excel evaluation files had been sufficiently edited and verified, McCarty was able to transform them into the choropleth maps shown in Part V (Maps 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3). Choropleths are thematic maps in which areas are shaded or patterned in proportion to the statistical variables that they display. In these instances the variables were the numbers assigned by the research crew and that represented property locations in the study area offering

relative neighborhood job or business opportunities in the fields of light carpentry, construction, house painting, landscaping, concrete and asphalt repair, and tree care. McCarty described this particular process as follows:

With regards to the process, I created a tax lot map using screenshots taken using the Multnomah County DART viewer. In AutoCAD, I inserted the resulting JPEG and placed rectangles over the 483 tax lots I was able to locate. I then manually color-coded them based on the scores given to each property, created the pertinent map features (i.e., legend(s), scale bar, etc.) in AutoCAD, and exported the results as PDFs and JPEGs, as needed. GIS was not used, given the unavailability of a tax lot shapefile.

In addition to digital photographs and individual property evaluations, the field crew also conducted weekly reviews of restaurants and other eating establishments in the study area. These used a weighted average to determine relative qualities of different varieties of foods that could be obtained along Alberta Street at a reasonable price and are described in more detail in Part V “Events and Activities,” and sample reviews are also provided in Appendix C.

### **Repeat Photography**

Repeat Photography is the process by which historical photos are used to document and illustrate change through time by comparing them to more recent photographs taken from the same location and vantage point, as exacting as possible (Zybach 1999: 22-23). Fig. 2.3 is an example of this method, using a photograph of Haigos Missionary Temple and several vacant lots from Volume 2 of the 1991 PDC Project Alberta report (PDC 1991: 120), and comparing it to a more recent photo showing a large apartment complex that has been constructed in this location during intervening years.

This method has been used extensively in this report by using the same series of 1991 PDC photos and comparing them with recent photographs taken by crew members during the course of this research for this specific purpose. In particular, repeat photography has proven to be an excellent method for documenting changes to historical Black-owned business properties along Alberta Street for which 1991 photos exist (see Figs. 4.3 through 4.12).

**Fig. 2.3. 2540 NE Alberta Street: Haigos Missionary Temple (1991)**



1991: Haigos Missionary Temple (white building) (PDC 1991: 120; Gardner et al. 1992: 69).



September 29, 2015: Photograph by Joshua Davis. Note trees before and after.

## Facebook Journal

Social media was used by crew members in the form of a Facebook page created specifically for this project: <https://www.facebook.com/Alberta.Street.Project>

The purposes for creating this page included teaching crewmembers social media etiquette; maintaining a project journal documenting interviews, presentations and field research findings; informing an interested public; and networking with local businesses and organizations that also had Facebook pages. The page also functioned as a testing platform and clearinghouse for data that could be displayed later on the project website. Networking was accomplished by first making personal contact with local businesses in the study area, and then using the “Like” feature to connect with them shortly thereafter. Some Facebook pages also allowed crewmembers to post project materials directly to their site, and this was also done when possible.

Some minor experimenting was done with paying for site advertising – usually in increments of \$5 or \$10 per selected post – and this was demonstrated as attracting a significant and immediate increase in claimed visits (by Facebook), but resulting in very little meaningful contact (as measured in “Likes” and direct contacts, such as email messages or post comments). By the completion of field research, the project Facebook page had attracted more than 115 Likes and several dozen positive comments on posts; almost all through direct contact and word of mouth, and very few via paid advertising.

## Website Design

An intended outcome of this project is the creation of a permanent website designed for use by interested public, by local students and teachers, and by community planners: [www.orww.org/Alberta\\_Street\\_Project](http://www.orww.org/Alberta_Street_Project)

The basic purpose of the website is to directly display and supplement this report for planning and educational uses by: 1) more fully documenting crew findings and recommendations, 2) making them available to the general public, and 3) providing a comprehensive digital reference library of germane articles and reports. Toward these ends a basic framework has been constructed and the reference library has been reasonably developed, but time and resource constraints have left much still remaining to be done. As this is being written, plans are being made to more fully populate the website for these purposes in coming weeks and months.



## Recommendations Protocol

An important part of this project is the development of a prioritized series of recommendations based on research findings and conclusions. This process began with specific questions listed in the formal interviews (see Appendix B), asking the advice of successful, older residents in the community (Table 2.1). This was followed by a careful consideration of the Recommendations developed by the 1992 Alberta Street research crew (Fig. 7.1.) and a discussion of which should be retained for current uses. In this manner, a number of the 1992 Recommendations were considered unnecessary for the present time, and a number of others were updated and reworded for current applications.

Further discussions and reviews of interviewee comments, research findings, and personal observations resulted in additional recommendations that could be listed. This final list was then arranged by perceived priority, based on crew decisions. Crewmembers were counseled to use direct quotes from interviewees to support their final choices whenever possible. Part VII of this report is the result of this process.

*[Note: In 1992 this section of the report was titled “Methodology,” in common with many other academic writings – including my own -- in which this term is commonly used to denote “Methods.” It has since come to the attention of the authors that the word “methodology” is more accurately concerned with the scientific study of “methods” and that it has been typically misused by many members of the academic community for several years. We have renamed this section as a result, in deference to greater accuracy.]*

### **Part III. N/NE Portland Black History, 1792 – 1992**

By Deborah Gardner (Moore), Andrew Clark, Delana Foster, Saretta Horn,  
Monica Owens and Tyran Ward

This section of the report was originally written for the *1992 Alberta Street Inventory with Recommendations* (Gardner et al. 1992: 9-39), with a major focus on the African American history of N/NE Portland, which remained largely unrecognized at that time and was not being taught in local schools. The text is modified slightly from its original form with minor edits and corrections. Several of the illustrations from the 1992 report, based on research at the Oregon Historical Society at that time, are also included, but they have been improved with better reproductions. A few illustrations and a map from the original document are not shown.

The determination of “historical periods” help us to understand how old, important, valuable, or rare the cultural resources are within the Alberta Street study area. The following six periods were named and determined on the basis of relevance to local history and importance to local African American culture:

1792-1804	Lower Chinookan Villages
1805-1842	Lewis and Clark and York
1843-1872	Alberta Street Pioneers
1873-1909	Albina/Portland City Additions
1910-1947	Railroads, Automobiles and Shipyards
1942-1992	Vanport Flood and Demographic Changes

### Lower Chinookan Villages (1792-1804)

In 1792, American and European explorers had their first encounters with the Chinook Indians. That year they sailed into the mouth of the Columbia River and explored as far as the Portland and Vancouver area.

The explorers were interested in trading for animal furs to sell to China, the United States, and England. They took the Chinook language and simplified it so they could make trade easier between the two cultures. This became known as "Chinook jargon." Anthropologists have classified the Chinooks into two groups: the Lower Chinooks and the Chinooks Proper. The Lower Chinooks were linguistic and the Chinooks Proper group was cultural. There were two minor dialects spoken by the Lower Chinooks separating them into the Chinooks Proper. The other Chinookan language was spoken by the Upper Chinooks, which has numerous variations (Ruby & Brown 1988: 5).

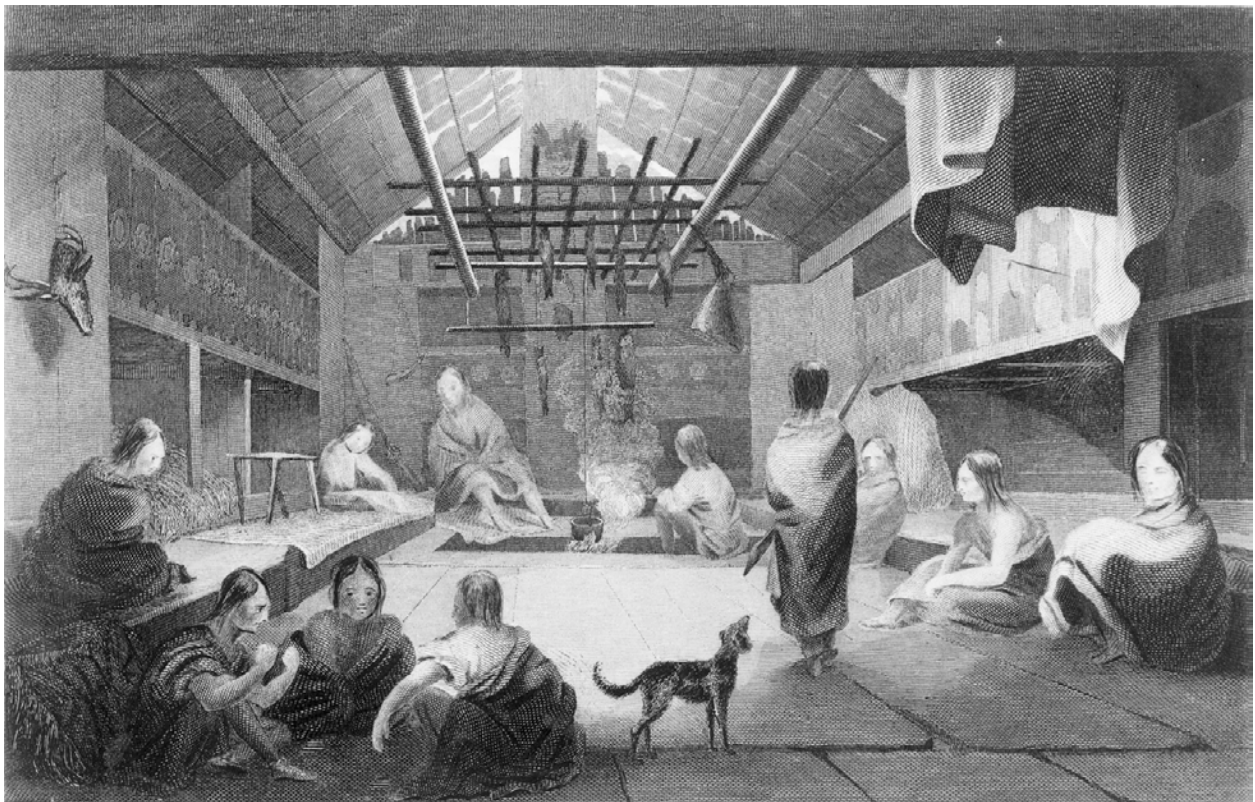


Fig. 3.1. Chinook Lodge Interior Sketch (Wilkes 1845: Vol. 4: 341; OHS Negative #4465)

The Chinooks lived in villages along the Columbia River (Fig. 3.1) around the time that Lewis & Clark visited the Portland area in 1805. The Chinooks major occupation was trade. They had plenty of land, roots, and fruits. One of their most important fruits was the salmonberry which they usually ate raw or made into a soup. For clothing the men usually wore mat robes and women usually wore fringed skirts made out of cedar bark and silk grass (Ruby & Brown 1988: 14).

Chinooks bought their slaves from the Klamath, Modoc, and the Kalapuya Indians. Most of their slaves were women and children. They usually kept their slaves; if not, they would trade them for canoes and other merchandise (Ruby & Brown 1988: 21).

In 1972, new diseases were introduced to the Indians such as smallpox, tuberculosis and venereal diseases to which they had no resistance. The new diseases almost totally wiped out the Indians. Some of them suffered from paralysis, possibly caused by their diet of oily marine food (Ruby & Brown 1988: 20).

Until the arrival of Europeans, American, and African explorers in the 1790s and the early 1800s, the primary residents of the Alberta Street area were probably Lower Chinookans. Cultural artifacts that are 200 years old in the area were probably left behind by their people and include tools and artwork made from stone or bone. Other cultural resources from that time would be any trees that started growing over 190 years ago (we weren't able to find any, though).

### Lewis and Clark and York (1805-1842)

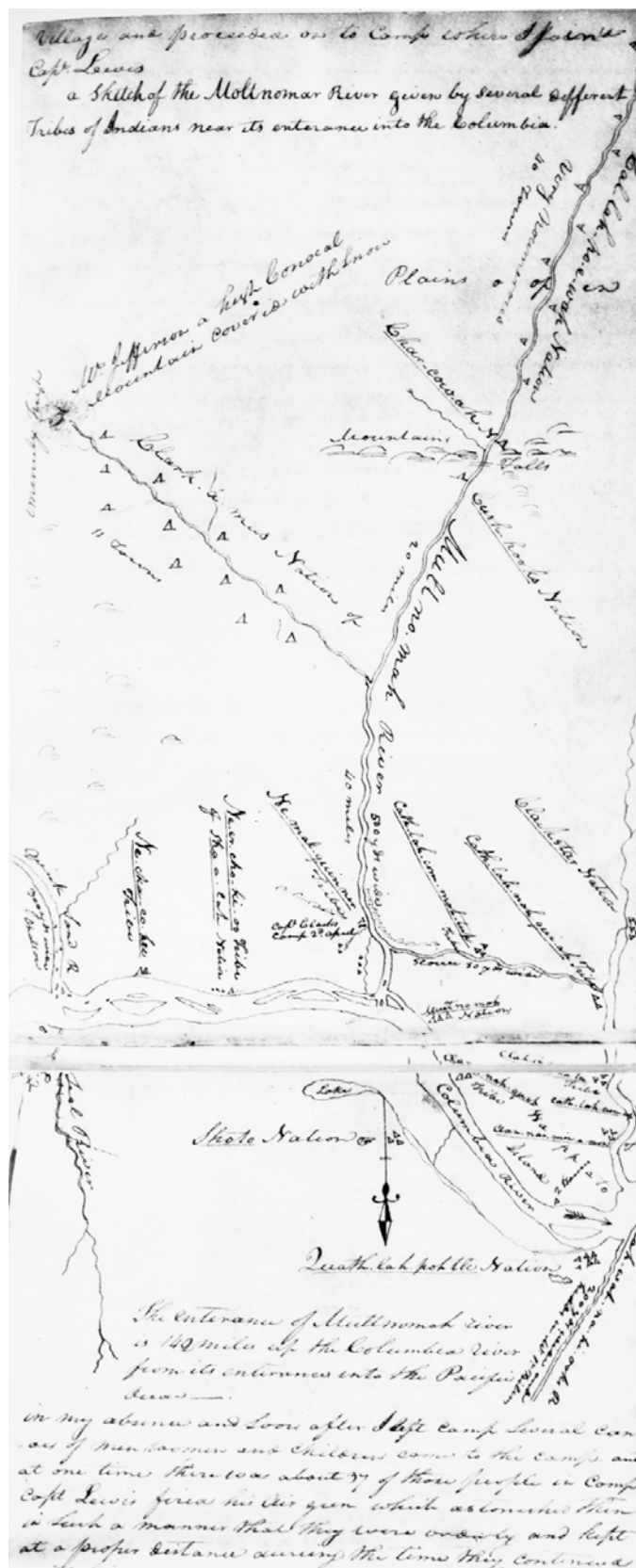
In 1805, two men from the United States, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, began leading an exploring expedition from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean. While on this trip they kept daily journals and drew maps of the areas they visited and made drawings of the plants and animals. Historians say that the most notable records kept of the Indians and their environment along the lower Columbia River, are those of Lewis and Clark (Foreman & Foreman, 1977:3). The men meticulously described the natives and their habitation and also accurately located villages on their maps. Clark described a village they encountered near Portland as (De Voto 1953: 275):

on the Main Lard. shore distance below the cast Island we landed at a village of 25 houses: 24 of those houses we[re] thached with straw, and covered with bark, the other house is built of boards in the form of those above, except that it is above ground and about 50 feet in length [and coverd with broad split boards] This village contains about 200 men of the Skilloot nation counted 52 canoes on the bank in front of this village Maney of them verry large and raised in bow.

While camped near the Washougal from April 6, 1806, Lewis & Clark did enough exploring and obtained sufficient information from the Indians to draw a map of the Portland area (Map 3.1). This map is "astonishingly accurate, considering that none of the members saw the Multnomah Channel side of Sauvie Island, and all the information was obtained from the Indians through a difficult language barrier" (Foreman & Foreman 1977: 21). There were 12 settlements in the area and the population was approximately 4,740. Three of those settlements are listed below:

**Table 3.1. Lower Chinookan Villages Documented by Lewis and Clark, 1806**

Name	Modern Location	Houses	Population
Multnomah	Sauvie Island; Reeder Point	6	800
Neerchakeoo	Portland Airport	1	100
Nechacokee	Blue Lake; Troutdale	1	100



Map 3.1. "Multnomah River," Lewis & Clark, April 6, 1806 (OHS Neg. #87867)



An important member of the Lewis & Clark expedition was York (Fig. 3.2. Note: This is an 1897 painting by Charles M. Russell titled “*Captain William Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition Meeting with the Indians of the Northwest*” and probably depicts Mandan Indians in present-day North Dakota). He was probably the first African American to explore the North Portland area (Betts 1985).



**Fig. 3.2. Lewis & Clark & York Meeting with Mandan Indians, 1805**

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark provide the first explicit descriptions of flora and fauna of their historical time which is related to the area. Some of the predominant trees that were listed include: Cottonwood, Oregon White Oak, Willow, Wild Cherry, Red Hawthorn, Western Red Cedar and Bigleaf Maple.

Also listed were the names of some of the edible plants: Salmonberry, Oregon Grape, Salal, Huckleberry, Blackberry, Wapato, Camas, Wild Strawberry, Skunk Cabbage and Thimbleberry.

Also listed were names of the most commonly used plants that served as medicine for the Indians: Pacific Dogwood, Western Trillium, Hedge Nettle, Native Tobacco and Columbine.

Other plants used for tools, utensils, and hunting purposes included Maidenhair Fern and Indian Hemp.

The earliest account of the fauna inhabiting this area was taken from the journals of Lewis & Clark expedition. The common names for animals found in the Portland area are: Black Bear, Black-Tailed Deer, Elk, Brown Wolf, Bobcat, Beaver, Otter, Mink, Raccoon, Squirrel, Rat, Mouse, Mole, Hare and Skunk.

There was only one domestic animal listed as being owned by the Indians, which was the dog. The Indians did not eat the flesh of the dog. Dogs were used for hunting, protection, and companionship.

A Chinookan chief named Casino lived near the mouth of the Willamette with his sister and her husband. Casino assisted in the expedition of Lewis & Clark by retrieving some of their stolen goods. They were all rewarded well with goods for their part in the undertaking. Casino was also a very important Indian leader and scout. He was known for being able to gather warriors by the thousands in 1810, but due to an epidemic in 1840 he could only get 400-500 warriors (Ruby & Brown 1976: 154, 196).

Hudson Bay Company traded bear & otter furs with the Indians along the Columbia River during 1810-1850's, then in 1825 they moved their headquarters from Astoria to the Vancouver, Washington area (Fort Vancouver). There they traded guns, blankets, knives, and beads.

Cultural resources found along Alberta Street from this period would include any trees over 150 years old, as well both Indian and Hudson Bay Company artifacts below the ground.



### **Alberta Street Pioneers (1843-1872)**

Beginning in 1843, thousands of southerners from the United States began moving to Oregon. They traveled by wagon trains over the Oregon Trail or arrived by ship. In 1849 there was a gold rush bringing in more people to California. Eventually many of these people also migrated north to Oregon.

The first known Black explorer in the Oregon country was Markus Lopeus. He arrived as a seaman from Boston, Massachusetts in 1787. Unfortunately, Markus was murdered by Tillamook Indians shortly after his arrival (Hill 1932: 1-2).

Many of the Black pioneers arrived in Oregon as slaves. One family, Robin and Polly Holmes and their daughter Mary Jane, came to Oregon in 1844 as slaves of Nathaniel Ford. Robin and Polly Holmes had three more children. It was Robin's dream to earn his freedom. Robin was eventually able to obtain freedom for himself, his wife, and his infant son. It took many years of legal custody court battles before Robin was able to gain freedom for his children. Other Black pioneers in Oregon included Letitia Carson, Reuben Shipley, George Washington, and George Bush.

Another happening in 1844 was the creation of the "Exclusion Law," developed by Peter Burnett. Peter Burnett is the author of the "Black Codes," another title for "Exclusion Laws." With this law Blacks living in the Oregon country were illegals. If they would not exit Oregon, they were given beatings. This law was not changed until 1926, when Blacks finally had the legal freedom to live in Oregon.

In 1848, a big change took place. Extracts from a contemporary diary gives this picture of Portland in January and February (Carey 1971: 655):

Portland has two white houses and one brick and three wood colored frame houses and a few cabins . . . We traveled four or five miles through the thickest woods I ever saw, all from two to six feet through, with now and then a scattered cedar; and intolerably bad road . . . The woods are infested with wild cats, panthers, bears and wolves.

Names of the original (White) pioneer settlers of the Alberta Street area include: George Emerson, William Bowering, Tim Crimmins, Pat Holland, J. McCallum and Thomas Kelley.

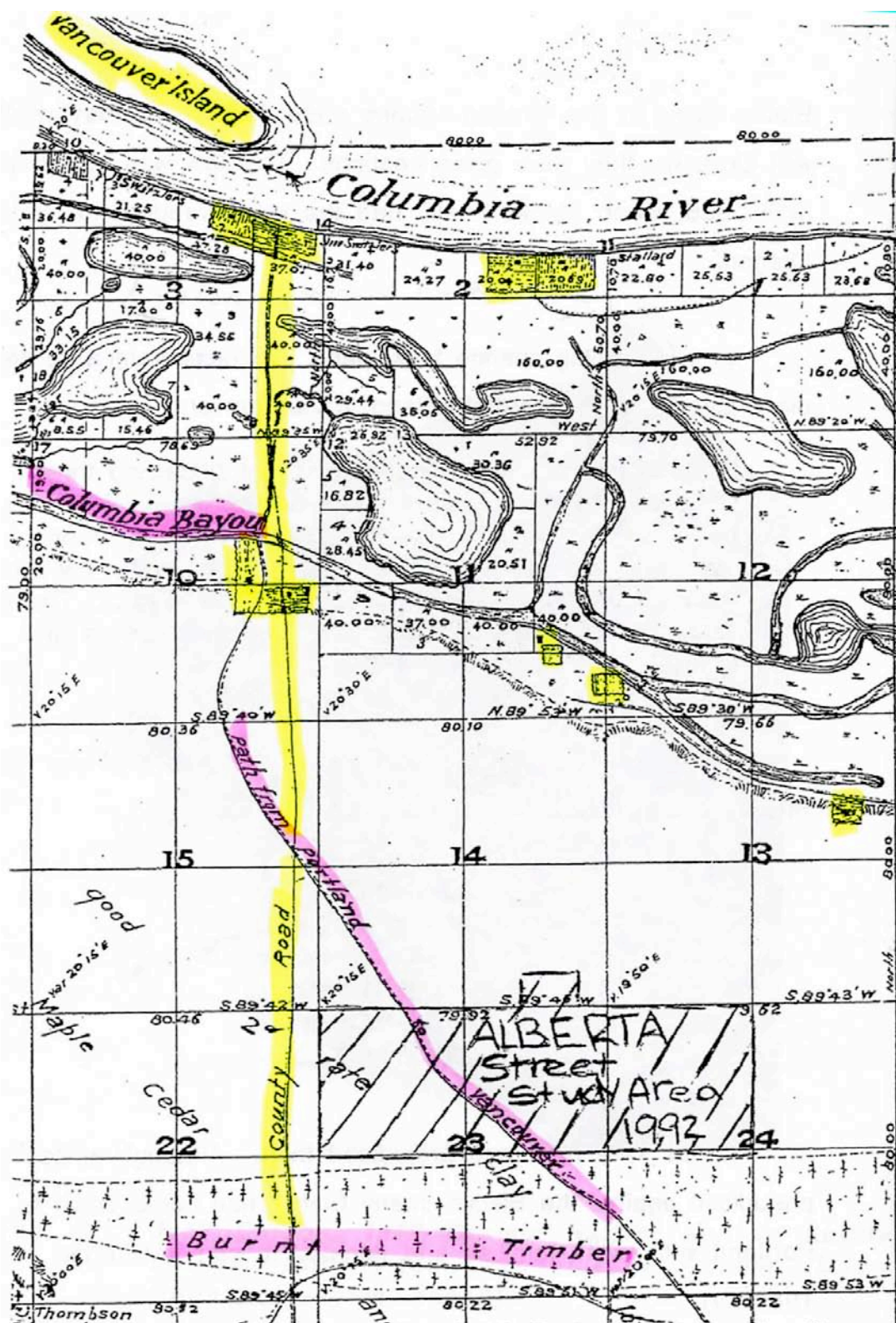


Fig. 10 1852 Map Detail of N/NE Portland Area (Ives, Tsp. 1 N., Rng. 1 E. Willamette Meridian)  
 Map 3.2. Annotated N/NE Portland Map Detail (Ives 1852; Gardner et al. 1992: 24).

It was very rural and prejudiced then. Although whites were prejudiced against the Blacks, many Blacks had come down to Portland with White families and decided to stay (McLagan 1981: 79).

Cultural resources remaining from this period are very rare. The 1852 US government map survey notes (Ives 1852: 7, 8, 26) shows a footpath from Portland to Vancouver that crosses the Alberta Street study area (Map 3.2). We were unable to locate any buildings or structures from that times although exotic plants such as landscape trees and fruit trees over 120 years old may exist in the area. Some Alberta Park vegetation may also exist from that time.

### **Albina/Portland City Additions (1873-1909)**

The Alberta Street area was originally developed from pioneer homesteads into streets and housing in the 1870s. At that time it was part of a town called "Albina," not Portland. Albina was formed in 1872-1873.

In 1883 a celebration was held in Portland. A group of Blacks marched in celebration of the completion of a railroad that ran from the East Coast to Portland Oregon. This railroad opened new job opportunities bringing more Blacks to Portland (McLagan 1980: 90). After 1883, when the railroad was completed, the population doubled.

The City of Albina was incorporated in 1887. Its corridors ran from Halsey Street north, to Morris Street, and from the river to what is now Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. Albina had been laid out as a plat. Albina annexed the land north to Killingsworth Street and east to 24th in 1889 (Fig. 3.3; OHS: "Closeup of Albina region on Clohessy and Stengeles map, 1890").

Although the City of Albina was mostly unplatted farmland, they made a huge leap and annexed everything north to Columbia Boulevard, and west to the Portsmouth area (Snyder, 1981:11; Note: this citation not included in 1992 References).

The Portland Hotel had opened in 1850 but was shortly abandoned. It was reopened and completely remodeled in 1890, with the help of wealthy patrons who put in over \$1 million. The hotel had 8 floors and 326 rooms. It stayed in the center of Black business for three years.

On July 1891, the cities of Portland, East Portland, and Albina were formed into one city "Portland" (Maps 3.3 and 3.4; OHS: "from a map by Lewis and Dryden in our collection"). The Portland area was about 25 square miles. For a short time Portland was the second largest city on the Pacific Coast. Although the population in 1891 was not precisely known, the Portland Directory estimated that the consolidated city held about 76,000.

Between 1890 and 1900 many Blacks moved away from Oregon, decreasing the population slightly. During that time Oregon's Black population went from 1,186 to 1,105. When the railroad (Fig. 3.4; *West Shore*, Feb. 1888, Vol. 14: 72-73) and the hotel opened, the Multnomah County percentage of Blacks increased due to extra jobs (McLagan 1980:114).





Fig. 3.3. Sketch of Albina, 1890 (OHS Neg. #bb013684; Gardner et al. 1992: 27)

The first Black churches opened in the 1890s. The first church was opened in 1895. The California African Methodist Episcopal Conference (A.M.E.) sent a man named Rev. S. S. Freeman to open an A.M.E. Church. A Black man named Mr. Jenkin donated the building he owned to the A.M.E. church. The deal fell through





**Fig. 3.4. Railway Works at Albina, 1888 (OHS Neg. #bb006839; Gardner et al. 1992: 40)**

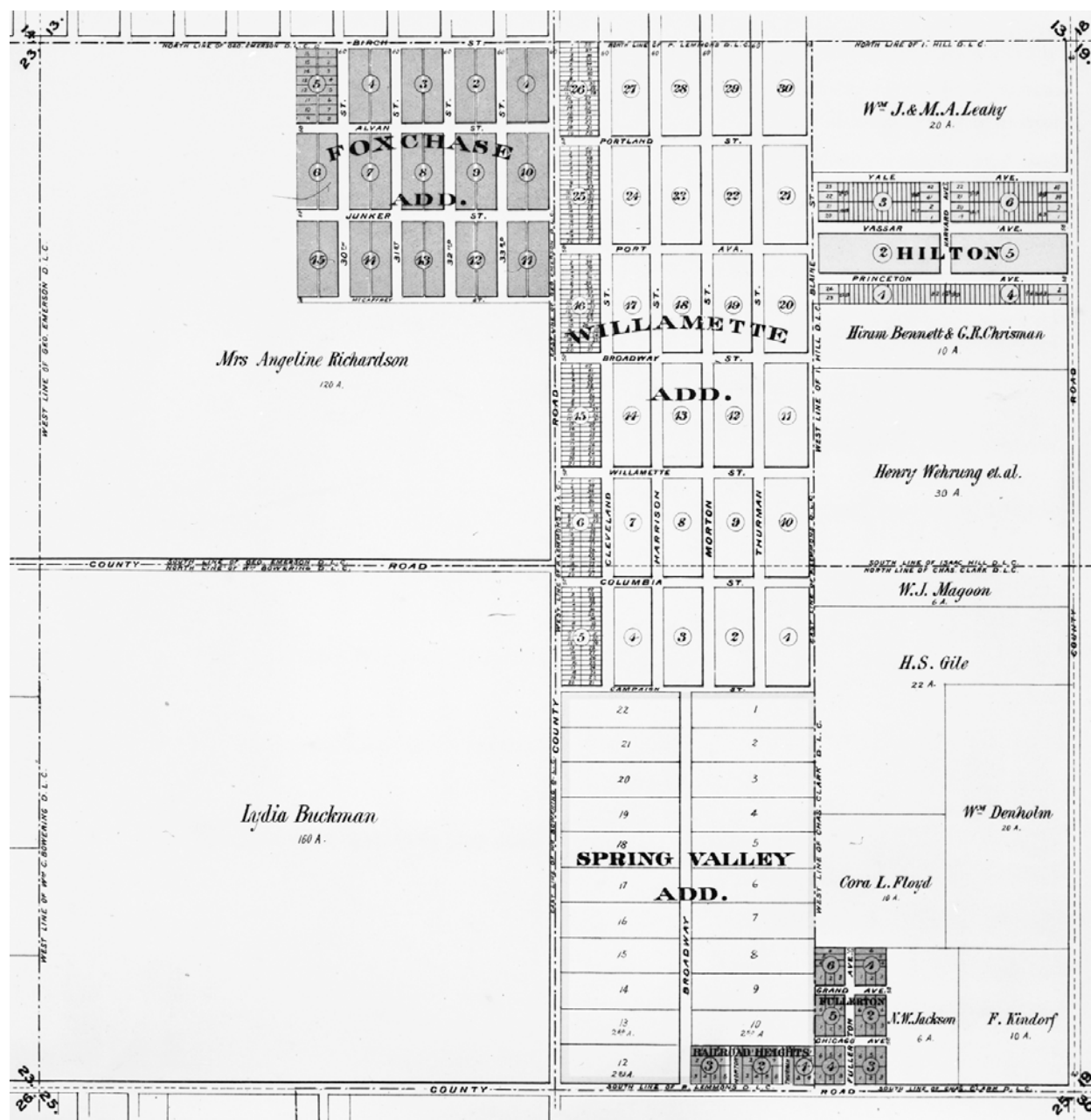
when Rev. Freeman married Mr. Jenkins' daughter to a porter on the Southern Pacific Railroad. Mr. Jenkin claimed he was offended. The A.M.E. church soon found another building to occupy which was a Japanese mission building on 10th Street. The church remained there at its site until 1916, later moving to the east side (McLagan 1980: 92).

In the late 1890s, a third Black church opened: Mount Olivet Baptist Church. Later it relocated to 1st and Schuyler Street. The lumber used to build the church was said to have been donated by a chapter of the Ku Klux Klan.

By 1894 the New Port Republican Club “wielded enough influence” to get a Black man, George Hardin (Fig. 3.5), hired on to the Portland police force (McLagan 1980: 122). Beginning in 1896, the *New Age* newspaper was being published. It was a weekly. It was not meant to be a Black daily newspaper. The *New Age* covered national news on the front page and Black national and local news on the inside. The publisher was a Black man named A. D. Griffin. In 1900, when the federal census was taken, he requested that the Blacks report their home ownerships. He wanted them to list all the things that were personal to them and of



**Fig. 3.5. George Hardin, Portland's First Black Policeman (OHS Neg. #OrHi 98324)**

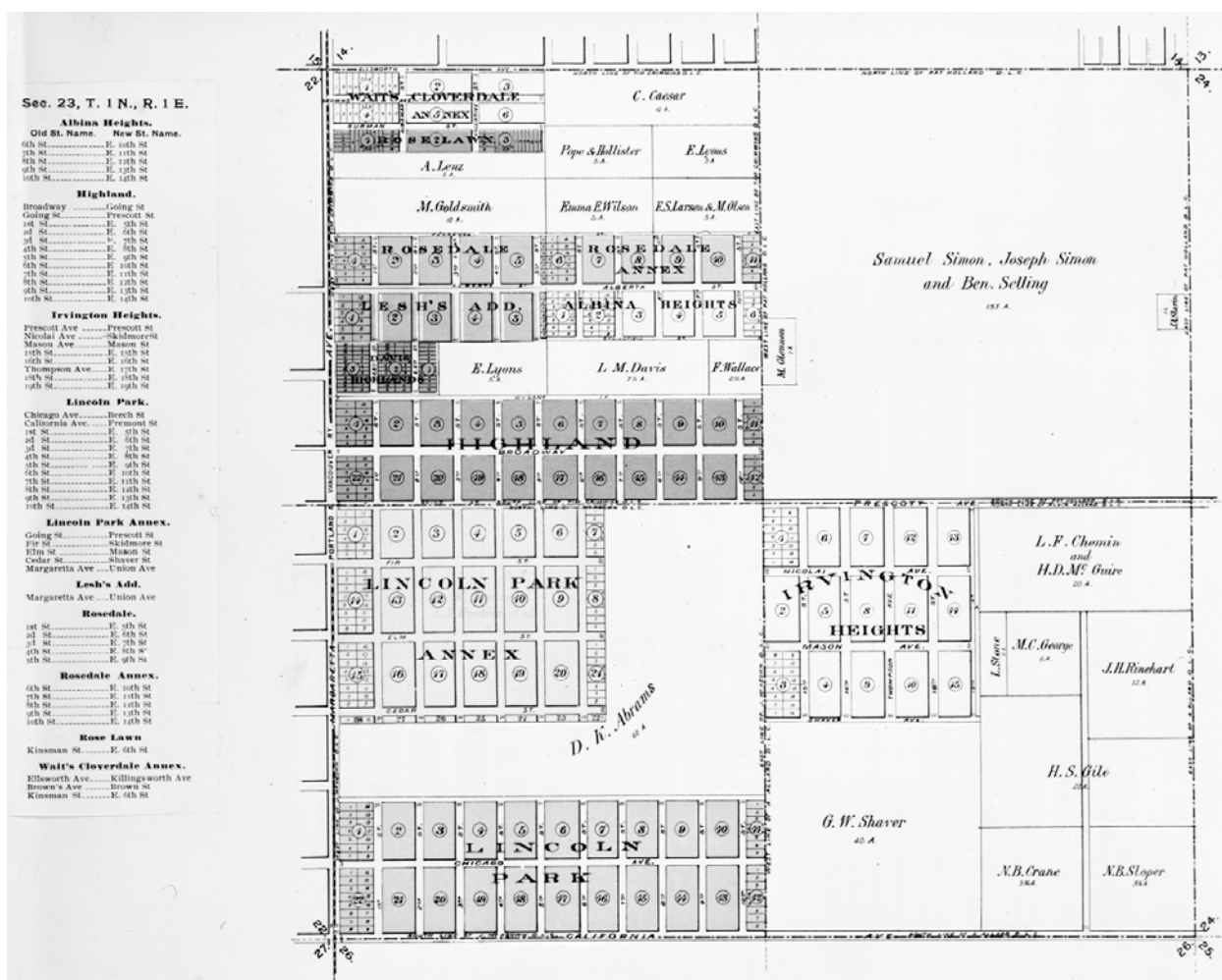


Map 3.3. 1891 Map Detail: Fox Chase Addition, S. 24, T. 1 N., R. 1 E. (OHS Neg. #87865)

value. He frequently reprinted statements of Booker T. Washington. Griffin also gave some advice and regrets (McLagan 1980: 110):

The negro should remember that he has rights, but also that after all, he as a whole is not equal in all respects to the whites, and therefore he has duties to himself and his successors to perform a duty to the race . . . let the colored man remember that he is one of 9 millions . . .





Map 3.4. 1891 Map Detail: Highland Addition, S. 23, T. 1 N., R. 1 E. (OHS Neg. #87866)

with a consciousness, an eye, an ear, a tongue, and a hand that are not to be despised and must be recognized.

Griffin was also quoted as saying: "We are sorry that the slums of the earth make Portland their homes, for they are making things very hard for our race." A. D. Griffin published the newspaper until 1907, then moved to Louisville, Kentucky (McLagan 1980: 110).

The second nationally Black owned newspaper in Portland was called the *Advocate*. It was published in 1903, and the majority of the founders were Black. They included: J. C. Logan, Edward Rutherford, E. D. Cannady, Howard Sproules, Edward Hunt, McCants Stewart, C. F. B. Moore, Bob Perry, W. H. Bolds, and A. Ballard. The newspaper consisted of four pages and also sold weekly. The first page held Black national and local news, Black advertisements, society news, and

entertainment pertaining to Black interests. The second page held national and state news. And the fourth page held reserved editorials, letters, church news, society news, and hotel notes. To the community the *Advocate* was a more up-to-date newspaper. It was considered “more lively” (McLagan 1980: 111).

Cultural resources remaining from this time include many streets. Martin Luther King Boulevard's name was changed from Margareta Street to Union Street in 1891; during the same year Broadway became Going, Going became Prescott, Ellsworth became Killingsworth, and Fir, Elm, and Cedar became Skidmore, Mason, and Shaver. A few buildings also remain from this time, including the 1906 Alberta Theater, which had been converted into a church by 1992 (Fig. 3.6), a ca. 1900 home on Prescott Street (Gardner et al. 1992: 117), a 1908 home that may have been an early school (ibid.: 75), and a 1909 “street car era” apartment house (ibid.: 68; Fig. 3.7). Also: a number of perennial shrubs (such as roses) and trees.

**Fig. 3.6. 1637 NE Alberta Street: Alberta Theatre (1906)**



1991: Greater Peace Church of God (PDC 1991: 28).



2015: Collage Art Materials. Photograph by Michael Grice, October 6, 2015.



**Fig. 3.7. 2403 NE Alberta Street: “Street Car Era” Apartment House (1909)**



1991: Street Car Era Apartment House (PDC 1991: 44).



2015: “Repurposed” corner Rexall Drugstore. Photo by Joshua Davis, September 29, 2015.

### **Railroads, Automobiles and Shipyards (1910-1947)**

By 1912 the automobile became the major instrument of change. The automobile was the most efficient way of travel making travel time much shorter. Oregon was accustomed to the wagon and horse way of transportation; generally roads were narrow with no place to park (Fig. 3.8).

Oregon had to go through a lot of changes. Barns and water troughs for horses were transformed into garages and gas stations for cars. Roads were made wider in order to allow for wider vehicles and planning for parking spaces became necessary.

The railroad was the only employer that gave decent jobs to Black people. In the year 1931, ten Black men were fired from a Portland hotel and replaced by ten White men. The ten Black men found jobs with the railroad company. Three months later the same hotel offered the Black men their jobs back only to have eight return. The other men had found good paying jobs with the railroad. By 1941, 98.6% of the surveyed "Occupational Status" of the Black population in Portland was employed by the railroad (McLagan 1980: 116).

The railroad provided a degree of stability for many Blacks during the Depression, but there was seldom if ever opportunity for advancement. Many had to take a second job to take care of their families, were confined to low paying jobs, and could not move into management positions traditionally held by White men.

To most Black people job opportunities were few. On many occasions when Blacks would go to the shipyards to ask for a job the supervisors often said nothing available or their Help Wanted notice said "WHITES ONLY." The good jobs were with Kaiser Company but with one of the union leader saying: "I would pull the place down rather than give Black people equal job rights" (McLagan 1980: 174).

Oregon was a very prejudiced state. There were many acts of discrimination between 1900 to 1940. A long time Black resident once said: "Oregon was a Klan state . . . a southern state transplanted to the north . . . a hell-hole when I grew up. It has always been a prejudiced state. It is today, believe it or not. There's a lot of prejudice even now, as far as that is concerned, but nothing like it used to be" (McLagan 1980: 129).





**Fig. 3.8. Automobile and horse-drawn carriage encounter, ca. 1900 (OHS Neg. # bb000117)**

In 1936 Albina was home to many minority groups of Germans, Swedes, Polish, and Russians immigrants were all held in Albina's corridors. They fought among themselves and with rival gangs for liquor and gambling.

Although many plants, streets, homes, and other buildings remain from this time period, perhaps the most significant to African Americans is the J. A. Merriman home (Gardner et al. 1992: 103 [the “only location in the study area that was found associated with an African American person before the Vanport flood”). Many people also mentioned the Fred Meyer's Store (ibid. 36, 119). Alberta Street buildings remaining from that time period include the 1917 “Cowley’s Dance Hall” (ibid. 64; Fig. 3.9), the 1927 “Early Roadside Thematic Beauty Salon” (ibid. 75; Fig. 3.10), and the 1931 Pacific Power and Light Co. Alberta Substation (ibid.: 63; Fig. 3.11).

**Fig. 3.9. 2734 NE Alberta Street: “Cowley’s Dance Hall” (1917)**



1991: Cowley’s Dance Hall (PDC 1991: 124).



2015: Note growth and size of fir trees on left. Photo by Joshua Davis, September 29, 2015.



**Fig. 3.10. 2303 NE Alberta Street: 1927 Early Roadside Thematic Beauty Salon**



1991: "Blue Structure on Street Corner" (PDC 1991: 42)



2015. "Habromania." Photograph by Joshua Davis, September 29, 2015.



**Fig. 3.11. 2701 NE Alberta Street: PP&L Alberta Substation (1931)**



1991: “Grey Boarded Structure/Muslim Community Center” (PDC 1991: 50).



2015: The Station. Photograph by Joshua Davis, September 29, 2015.

### **Vanport Flood and Demographic Changes (1948-1992)**

Vanport was located along the Columbia River where Jantzen Beach now stands. This was a place where the majority of Black shipyard workers worked and lived during World War II. Heavy rains in May of 1948 flooded out Vanport (Figs. 3.12 and 3.13).

There were a few deaths, 18,500 homeless people and many survivors were left to tell about it. Those that survived the flood moved into the North and Northeast parts of Portland like Columbia Villa and Dekum Courts (McLagan 1980: 177).

Living conditions in North and Northeast Portland were more crowded in 1957 than they had been in 1945. The Portland Housing Authority was criticized for its biased views or opinions regarding the housing needs of Portland's Black community (McLagan 1980: 178).

The landmark preservation programs had no part in the 1960s Model Cities Programs, originally located in the Albina neighborhood. Model Cities claim was to create a "New Deal". The identified low-income neighborhoods (both Black and White) would be rebuilt and developed into suitable living needs. The program completed some of the projects, but did not completely live up fully to their end of the deal.

The demographics of this movement were that there was a lot of racism towards Blacks because the White people didn't want a lot of Blacks living in their part of town. There was even segregation in the school system for a period of time until people had that abolished {McLagan 1980: 179}.

Three of the oldest Black owned businesses in Portland are Coast Janitorial Service Inc. (Gardner et al. 1992: 115), Sevier's Gas Station (ibid.: 107), and the Texan Club (ibid.: 89, 141; Fig. 4.10), all located along Alberta Street. Businesses were starting to peak for Black people because they knew they had to become entrepreneurs in order to survive in a time when race and economics were going against them (e.g., Figs. 3.14 and 3.15).

In addition to the African American-owned businesses, the cultural resources in the study area that date back to the time of the Vanport flood include shrub and flower landscaping, architectural fence types, schools, various churches, and buildings. These are [in 1992\*] the newest cultural resources in the neighborhood.





**Fig. 3.12. Vanport Flood, aerial view, 1948 (OHS Neg. #bb013637; Gardner et al. 1992:**



38)

**Fig. 3.13. Police Cleanup from Vanport Flood (OHS Neg. #OrHi 98324)**



**Fig. 3.14. Harvey Garnett, Owner of Albina Theater, 1966-1975**



**Fig. 3.15. Site of Shag Thomas' "Shag's Arena Tavern & Bar," 1969-1981**

Money is now being made by business and organizations located in the community but owned by people who don't live in the community. This is why money in the community is drying up and a lot of businesses are struggling to get on their feet, shutting down, or getting ready to go out of business because money is taken out of the community. This is why people need to give back and help their community.

*[\*Note: This latter, Vanport, section of the report was principally researched and written by the grandson of long-time local businessman Richard Sevier and largely reflects the recorded interview they conducted on August 13, 1992 (Gardner et al. 1992: 149). At that time many of the “newest cultural resources in the neighborhood” were constructed following WW II and the Vanport flood and were less than 50 years of age; i.e., had been built after 1942. At this time (2015) a large number of structures in the Alberta Street neighborhood – those built between 1942 and 1965 – have achieved historical status since the 1992 Report and likely qualify for inclusion in national, state and local considerations of their significance and value.]*



## **Part IV. Alberta Street History, 1993-2015: Neighborhood Gentrification**

In February 2015, *Governing Magazine* issued a report titled “Gentrification in American Report” (Maciag 2015: [www.governing.com/gov-data/census/gentrification-in-cities-governing-report.html](http://www.governing.com/gov-data/census/gentrification-in-cities-governing-report.html)). The 50 largest US cities were considered in the study and working definitions of gentrification were based on changing neighborhood property values and level of education of residents (a proxy measure for household income levels). Census data were used to determine neighborhood boundaries and changing levels of education and ethnicity. The report’s conclusion made national news – Portland, Oregon was determined to be the most gentrified City in the US since the turn of the century:

A select group of cities experienced extensive gentrification in recent years. Perhaps nowhere were changes more visible than in Portland, where 58 percent of eligible tracts gentrified – more than any other city reviewed . . . In the majority of cities reviewed, less than one-fifth of poorer, lower priced neighborhoods experienced gentrification. If all city neighborhoods are considered -- including wealthier areas not eligible to gentrify -- less than one of every ten tracts gentrified. Cities like Detroit, El Paso and Las Vegas experienced practically no gentrification at all.

### **N/NE Portland Racial Demographics, 1970-2010**

“Gentrification” is typically defined as the process in which lower income families are forced to move from a neighborhood because of rapidly escalating property values, and they are replaced by higher income individuals and families (see Fig. 4.1). Although the definition is based on economics, there is often a racial factor involved in these displacements as well, as illustrated by Maps 4.1 and 4.2. The majority of Portland’s gentrification involved N/NE neighborhoods and focused on the area’s most heavily populated Black neighborhoods. The 1992 Alberta Street Project boundary has been drawn upon each map to place these demographic shifts in context to this report.

N/NE Portland has long been a focus of gentrification, as described in the current issue of *Flux* magazine from the University of Oregon (2015: 54):

While Albina fostered a community of prospering Black-owned businesses and a bustling nightlife, city planners had different ideas for the area. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, cities across the nation

**Fig. 4.1. 1452 NE Alberta: Arthur Cole Candy Co. (1991)**



1991: Arthur Cole Candy Co. (PDC 1991: 91)



2015: 24 years later, coffee bars and clothing shops. Photo by Michael Grice, October 5, 2015.



began a wave of urban renewal projects that aimed to revitalize inner-city neighborhoods. For the Portland Development Commission (PDC), Albina was one of those areas. In 1962, PDC justified its actions for re-development in the Central Albina Study by stating that “urban renewal, largely clearance, appears to be the only solution, not only to the blight that presently exists in Albina, but also to avoid the spread of that blight to other surrounding areas.”

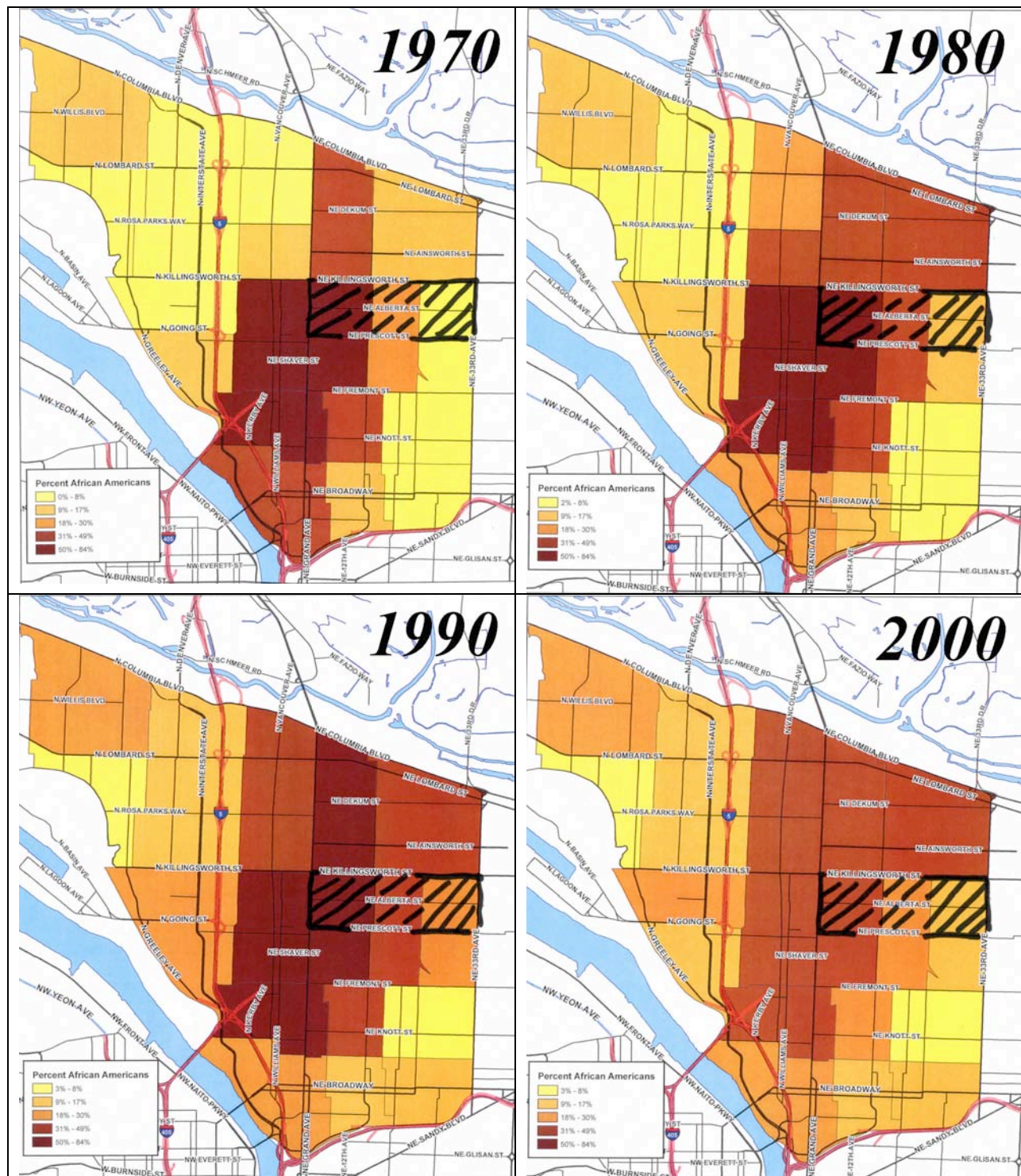
In her Alberta Street Project interview, Rukaiyah Adams agreed with this assessment, stating: “Gentrification is not the problem. The problem is pretending that we did not understand what the consequences of gentrification would be. It is exactly what was intended.”

In his *Governing* report, Maciag further observes a process that seems to describe recent Alberta Street history very well:

Some research examining gentrification has instead focused primarily on changes in household income. However, many of the first residents to “gentrify” a neighborhood are often artisans or young professionals who might not earn much more than their new neighbors. Such changes to a community are not reflected in income levels. For this reason, *Governing* instead measured changes in educational attainment, which strongly correlates with income.

Meredith Rizzari, in her 2005 Master’s degree thesis from Portland State University (Rizzari 2005), elaborates further on this point, and is specific to the Alberta Street study area:

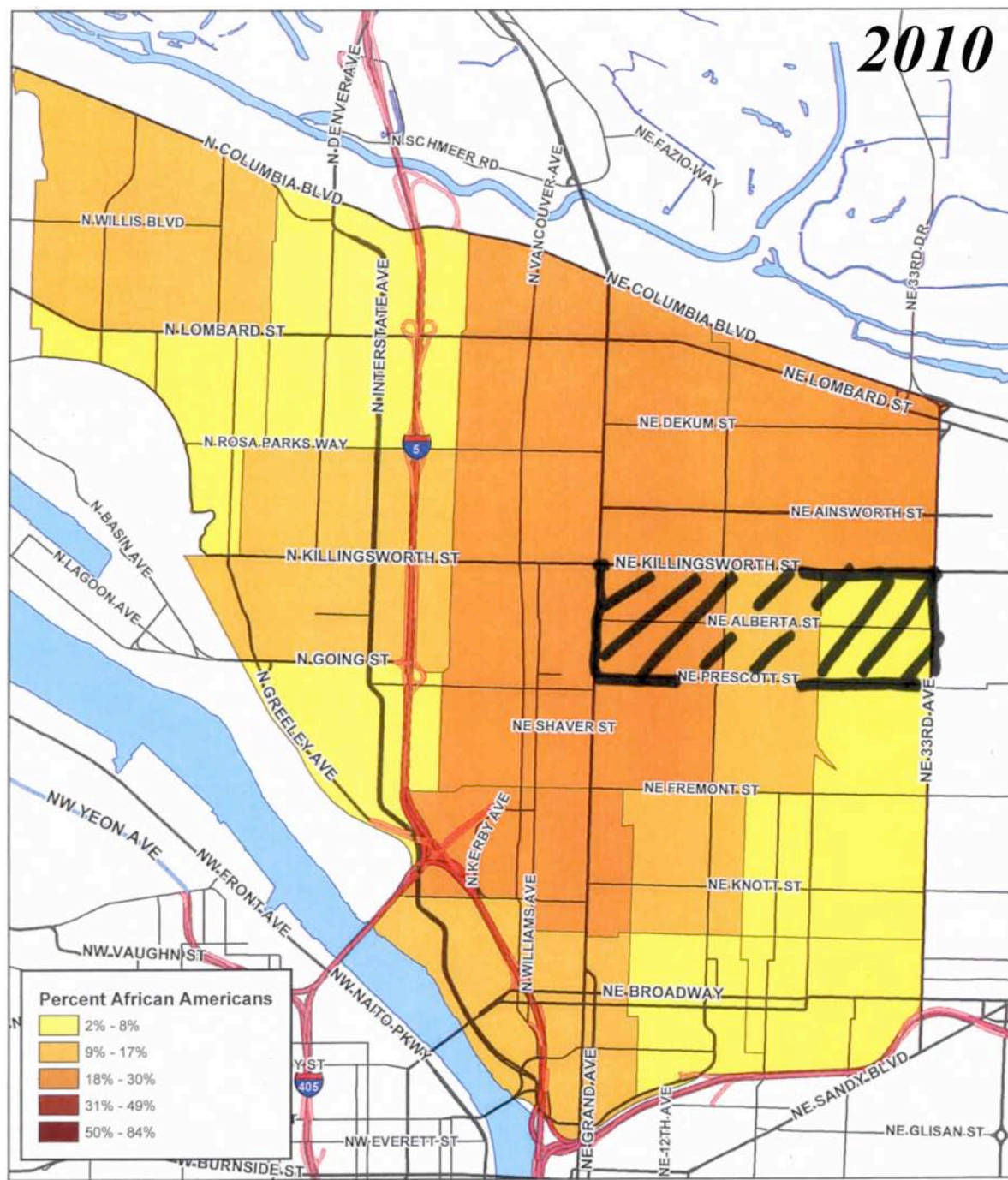
. . . as neighborhoods with high concentrations of artists, galleries, and performance venues - i.e. cultural capital - succumb to gentrification, the neighborhoods eventually become home to residents with higher levels of economic capital and relatively low levels of cultural capital . . . In effect, artists are part of the gentrification process in two ways: (1) by displacing manufacturing businesses that once occupied the buildings, and (2) by attracting a middle class population and increasing the demand for the property. Rents eventually increase and the artists are financially forced to relocate again, starting the process again in another community.



**Maps 4.1. Racial Demographics of N/NE Portland, 1970-2000.**

Source: Portland Housing Bureau (2014); 1970-2000 US Census data.





**Black or African American Percent of Total Population 2010  
North/Northeast Portland  
by Census Tract**

Created by Portland Housing Bureau, June 2014  
Source: 2010 Decennial Census, National Historic Geographic System

Area	African-American	Total	Percent
Portland	36,695	583,776	6%
North/Northeast	12,274	83,237	15%

**Map 4.2. Racial Population Distribution in N/NE Portland, 2010.**

## Effect on Business Property Values, 1991-2014

The effect of gentrification on property values is central to most definitions of gentrification – property becomes so valuable that poor tenants cannot afford the increases in rental fees or in property taxes and are forced to move to a less expensive area. This effect is clearly evident in the Alberta Street study area, where property values have typically risen more than 1,000% since the 1990s .

Table 4.1 contains 68 businesses along NE Alberta Street that are contained within the study area and which accurately reflect the rapid increase in local property values that has taken place since the 1992 Report was written. These businesses were selected on the basis of: 1) being listed in the 1992 Alberta Street Project Report; 2) being listed in the 1991 PDC Report completed at the request of OAME, and 3) being listed in the current Alberta Main Street database.

The 1992 report contained 175 addresses, but not all were on Alberta Street (Gardner et al 1992: 140-142); the 1991 Report only listed 75 business addresses as being active along Alberta Street during that year (PDC 1991); and the 2015 Alberta Main Street database has 211 current business names along Alberta Street, but many use the same address, and several are no longer in business. None of the lists are entirely comprehensive, and all of them contain several addresses that do not match with the other lists. As a result, the listed 68 businesses are as complete a listing as possible for all of the businesses we can identify from 1991 tax records and photographs in the 1991 Report, and by personal consultations with long-time members of the Alberta Street business community -- but there will still be some unavoidable errors. Given the efforts to stratify and correct the separate datasets, however, we believe that the resulting patterns and trends are reasonably accurate and representative of the Alberta Street business community as a whole.

Table 4.1 contains a listing of the 68 Alberta Street businesses that were selected in the manner just described. They are arranged in numerical address order, from MLK Blvd. on the west to 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue on the east. The 1991 market values are those given in the 1991 PDC/OAME Report, Vol. I (PDC 1991). Taxes were paid on those values at that time, but in 1996 and 1997 property tax limitations were summarized by Oregon voters under Measure 50. This stated that property taxes could not be increased more than 3% a year, beginning with 1995 property values. Therefore, apparently due almost entirely to gentrification, current market values for Alberta Street business properties are much greater – more than 300% -- than their assessed tax values. This condition may be one more factor in the interest of outside investors to purchase Alberta Street properties.

**Table 4.1. NE Alberta Street Business Property Values, 1991-2014**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name of Business</b>	<b>1991 Market</b>	<b>2014 Assessed*</b>	<b>2014 Market</b>
714	Coast Industries, Inc.	\$76,300	\$137,490	\$510,750
806	St. Andrew's Catholic	\$382,400	\$0	\$2,085,720
1014	Cotton Flower Press	\$7,600	\$77,100	\$261,170
1011	Grilled Cheese Grill	\$27,700	\$88,240	\$520,000
1028	Love Train Bar	\$27,700	\$103,570	\$419,900
1130	Brooks Staffing	\$35,800	\$58,640	\$544,910
1222	Waagmeester Canvas	\$35,700	\$64,280	\$260,000
1330	Brandon's Barbershop	\$21,300	\$298,140	\$1,424,500
1422	Case Study Coffee	\$7,700	\$66,580	\$298,540
1460	Tin Shed	\$7,500	\$80,290	\$229,000
1464	Emporium 1476	\$20,000	\$190,620	\$709,330
1505	Bantu Towing	\$9,100	\$9,290	\$127,780
1520	Every Day Wine	\$30,000	\$402,370	\$1,541,690
1533	New Rose City Cab Co.	\$10,500	\$17,170	\$323,000
1600	Green Bean Books	\$13,200	\$89,420	\$218,450
1614	Inn Alberta Arts	\$27,500	\$89,150	\$430,710
1626	Black Educational Center	\$17,100	\$279,600	\$523,700
1630	House of Umoja	\$34,400	\$0	\$421,400
1637	Collage Art Materials	\$28,000	\$50,470	\$591,640
1700	Community Cycling Center	\$41,000	\$244,650	\$1,542,250
1705	Courtesy Janitorial	\$18,800	\$43,340	\$373,680
1726	Alberta Main Street	\$18,400	\$49,600	\$593,300
1732	The Make House	\$14,000	\$115,770	\$221,260
1733	Aviary	\$88,100	\$1,648,150	\$4,101,200
1800	Random Order Pie Bar	\$7,500	\$102,730	\$620,000
1801	Solae Lounge	\$28,400	\$102,730	\$620,000
1812	Tumbleweed	\$6,400	\$98,590	\$440,000
1816	Grasshopper	\$6,400	\$50,420	\$440,000
1824	Petite Provence	\$13,300	\$90,880	\$530,000
1829	Brilliant Body PDX	\$91,800	\$547,450	\$2,260,000
1834	Hilt	\$27,000	\$48,550	\$620,000
2000	Don Pancho Taqueria	\$29,100	\$111,250	\$692,000
2016	Guys Interior Restoration	\$24,700	\$40,800	\$263,650
2025	Screaming Sky	\$31,500	\$2,271,000	\$3,874,000
2026	The Know Bar	\$10,900	\$17,420	\$26,500
2035	Salt & Straw Ice Cream	\$25,500	\$450,330	\$1,108,500
2124	El Nutri Taco	\$10,400	\$28,230	\$208,130
2136	Bolt Fabric Boutique	\$57,100	\$410,510	\$989,400
2203	Ciao Vito	\$22,900	\$77,100	\$261,170
2204	Pine State Biscuits	\$46,000	\$208,390	\$609,590
2223	Townshends Teahouse	\$9,000	\$206,440	\$592,350
2231	23rd Ave. Food Carts	\$17,800	\$6,760	\$76,530
2303	Habromania	\$11,200	\$17,890	\$158,000

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name of Business</b>	<b>1991 Market</b>	<b>2014 Assessed*</b>	<b>2014 Market</b>
2315	The Knock Back	\$10,600	\$105,170	\$329,440
2338	Cruzroom	\$30,800	\$123,280	\$623,150
2403	Just Bob	\$46,200	\$95,360	\$904,330
2407	The Pencil Test	\$10,600	\$95,360	\$904,330
2415	Alleyway Café & Bar	\$14,700	\$43,620	\$284,690
2515	All Teased Up Hair	\$8,000	\$23,390	\$236,930
2525	Halibut's Restaurant	\$37,800	\$252,120	\$887,100
2616	Tastemakers Salon	\$54,700	\$181,440	\$667,160
2640	West Coast Fitness	\$69,000	\$360,370	\$1,789,000
2712	Neko Asian Grill	\$18,600	\$128,610	\$491,600
2715	Alberta Street Gallery	\$11,300	\$113,160	\$265,420
2739	Riggins Remodeling	\$16,000	\$25,640	\$220,870
2805	Tonalli's Ice Cream	\$27,200	\$67,550	\$415,000
2817	La Sirenita	\$48,600	\$27,730	\$110,240
2828	Black United Fund	\$123,000	\$0	\$951,540
2839	La Bonita	\$18,600	\$29,490	\$307,100
2904	Bernie's Southern Bistro	\$24,400	\$132,440	\$748,680
2915	Urban Pilates	\$43,900	\$91,800	\$455,000
2916	Pie Footwear	\$18,400	\$350,040	\$907,400
3000	Alberta Rose Theatre	\$57,100	\$197,770	\$1,012,400
3003	Appliance Hospital	\$16,800	\$187,860	\$840,000
3024	Cha'ba Thai	\$9,500	\$15,690	\$355,000
3039	The Big Egg	\$15,400	\$346,850	\$843,780
3108	Apartment House	\$110,000	\$288,180	\$719,710
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$2,317,900</b>	<b>\$12,374,320</b>	<b>\$38,677,280</b>

\*In 1997, Oregon voters passed Measure 50, which limits tax increases to no more than 3%/year, beginning with 1995 market values. These numbers, therefore, represent significant tax savings for current property owners.

The 2014 Market values and the 2014 Assessed values were both obtained from the City of Portland [www.PortlandMaps.com](http://www.PortlandMaps.com) website. It is worth noting that several address and other numerical errors and address changes were also found on this website (although otherwise it was very easy and helpful to use), which further compounded the problems with combining data from the other three sources.

In sum, the market values for 68 representative Alberta Street business properties increased from \$2,318,000 to \$38,677,000 from 1991 through 2014 – an amazing \$1,669% increase in value in 23 years. In the meantime, property taxes have only increased to \$12,374,000 assessed value during those same years, which is less than 1/3 of the true current market values of the properties.



## Effect on Black-Owned Businesses, 1991-2015

In 1992 the focus of the Alberta Street inventory was local Black history and historic buildings in the study area; for the 2015 inventory the focus has been Black-owned businesses within the study area, and particularly how they have been affected by neighborhood gentrification. This change in research focus had two components: first, a credible job of documenting local Black history had already been successfully completed in 1992 (see Part III); and second, a major recommendation of the 1992 Report was to “actively support existing Black businesses” (Gardner et al 1992: 135), which we have followed.

Fig 4.2 shows a number of Black-owned businesses that currently operate in the Alberta Street study area. Table 4.2 is a listing of 20 Black-owned businesses that

**Fig.4.2. Current Black-Owned Businesses in Alberta Street Study Area, 2015**



Photos by Michael Grice, October 5, 2015.

**Table 4.2. Black-Owned Businesses on NE Alberta Street, 1991-2015**

<b>1991 Owner</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>1991 Business</b>	<b>2015 Owner</b>	<b>2015 Business</b>
N. Hartley	0506	Nate Hartley Oil	N. Hartley	Nate Hartley Oil
H. Scott	0714	Coast Industries	Coast Janitorial	Coast Industries, Inc.
L. Franklin	0903	Franklin's Market	C. Chung	Alberta Market
S. Scott	1028	Love Train Bar	M. Beglan	Alberta Street Pub
R. Sevier	1101	Sevier & Sons	Brown Car Properties	Radio Room
PDC/Bell	1130	OAME	S. Brooks	Brooks Staffing
M. Johnson	1330	P H Auto Repair	T. Brandon	Brandon's Barbershop
A. Simmons	1460	Simmons BBQ	R. Hill	Tin Shed
A. Palmer	1533	Rose City Cab Co.	Bantu Development	New Rose City Cab
BEC	1626	Treatment Facility	Alberta Arts	Headstart
BEC	1630	House of Umoja	Lifeworks NW	Lifeworks
J. Parks	1700	Texan	PCRI	Community Cycling
A. Mitchell	1701	Mitchell Plumbing	M. Booker	No Limits Stickers
F. Booker	1705	Courtesy Janitorial	M. Booker	Courtesy Janitorial
J. Parks	1726	Texan II Annex	E. Clark	Earl's Barbershop
J. Benjamin	1801	Joe's Place	Pawnee Corp.	Solae's Lounge
A. Simmons	2222	Pride of Portland	Alberta Development	Optic Nerve Tattoos
J. Pendergrass	2515	"oil painter"	A&J Henderson	All Teased Up Hair
B. J. Moore	2525	1 More Tyme Inn	G. Reed-Thrasher	Halibut's Restaurant
A. Spears	2616	D P Printing	E. Spears	Tastemakers Salon
D. Bauer	2739	Vacant	S&G Riggins	Riggins Remodeling
S. Bryan	2828	Bryan & Assoc.	BUF of Oregon	BUF of Oregon
H. Brannon	3000	Macedonia Temple	R&D Mayfield	Alberta Rose Theatre

BEC = Black Educational Center

Bell = Pacific Northwest Bell Telephone Co.

BUF = Black United Fund

OAME = Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs

PCRI = Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives

PDC = Portland Development Commission

and organizations that existed on NE Alberta Street in 1991 and/or are operating today. Table 4.3 compares the change in market values of the Black-owned business properties from 1991 with 2014, and with the same values for all 67 Alberta Street businesses listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.3 shows: Black-owned properties (20) comprise 30% of the total of all businesses (67) listed in Table 4.1; their total market value in 1991 (\$652,000) was 28% of the total value of all listed businesses for that year (\$2,318,000); their total value in 2014 (\$8,405,000) was only 22% of the value of all listed businesses that year (\$38,677,000); their increase in value from 1991 to 2014 was 1,288%, while the increase in value for the same time period for all businesses was 1,669%; and total 2014 Black-owned business market values were nearly four times (3.96 x)

**Table 4.3 NE Alberta Street Black-Owned Business Property Values, 1991-2014**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name of Business</b>	<b>1991 Market</b>	<b>2014 Assessed*</b>	<b>2014 Market</b>
714	Coast Industries, Inc.	\$76,300	\$137,490	\$510,750
1028	Love Train Bar	\$27,700	\$103,570	\$419,900
1130	Brooks Staffing	\$35,800	\$58,640	\$544,910
1330	Brandon's Barbershop	\$21,300	\$298,140	\$1,424,500
1460	Tin Shed	\$7,500	\$80,290	\$229,000
1505	Bantu Towing	\$9,100	\$9,290	\$127,780
1533	New Rose City Cab Co.	\$10,500	\$17,170	\$323,000
1626	Headstart	\$17,100	\$279,600	\$523,700
1630	Lifeworks Umoja Center	\$34,400	\$0	\$421,400
1700	Community Cycling Center	\$41,000	\$244,650	\$1,542,250
1705	Courtesy Janitorial	\$18,800	\$43,340	\$373,680
1726	Alberta Main Street	\$18,400	\$49,600	\$593,300
1801	Solae Lounge	\$28,400	\$102,730	\$620,000
2515	All Teased Up Hair	\$8,000	\$23,390	\$236,930
2525	Halibut's Restaurant	\$37,800	\$252,120	\$887,100
2616	Tastemakers Salon	\$54,700	\$181,440	\$667,160
2739	Riggins Remodeling	\$16,000	\$25,640	\$220,870
2828	Black United Fund	\$123,000	\$0	\$951,540
3000	Alberta Rose Theatre	\$57,100	\$197,770	\$1,012,400
3024	Cha'ba Thai	\$9,500	\$15,690	\$355,000
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$652,400</b>	<b>\$2,120,560</b>	<b>\$8,405,330</b>
	<b>All Businesses (Table 4.1)</b>	<b>\$2,317,900</b>	<b>\$12,374,320</b>	<b>\$38,677,280</b>

\*See note on Table 4.1 regarding 1997 Measure 50.

greater than their assessed tax values in 2014, while all businesses combined were just a little over three times (3.12 x) market value over assessed value.

[Note: These latter numbers are affected somewhat by the \$0 assessed values placed on St. Andrews Cathedral, the non-profit House of Umoja and the non-profit Black United Fund of Oregon, but they are still significant with very similar statistics if these entries are factored out.]

Jerome Polk long-time owner and manager of JP's Custom Picture Framing and Gallery on Killingsworth Street, offered the following observation:

Gentrification has two sides. On the one hand, business is booming. On the other hand, we've lost the sense of community that we once took for granted. But . . . is that good for all my people? I don't see anybody anymore. Eighty percent of my customers are new and European American. When I think about how this housing boom has happened, it appears to be part of a plan because you just don't invest

that kind of money without expecting that it's going to pay off. Somebody, long ago, anticipated the effects of gentrification.

Ernest Harris, long-time employee of New Rose City Cab Co., offered a slightly different perspective:

I look at it differently. I think when you create a business you don't think of it as starting a black business; you want to start a business that serves everybody because there's not enough African Americans to sustain a business, long-term. We have to think broader. We have to think about how to appeal to everybody and attract everybody. We need to concentrate on sharing and working together as one unit.

**1991/2015 Alberta Street Black-Owned Business Tour.** The following pages contain a series of Repeat Photographs featuring 15 of the 20 Black-owned Alberta Street business properties listed in Table 4.2. The top photographs were taken in April 1991 as part of a 2-volume PDC business report specifically requested that year by OAME (PDC 1991); the bottom photos were taken by Joshua Davis and Michael Grice in late September and early October of this year in an effort to match the 1991 photograph locations as nearly as possible.



**Fig. 4.3. 714 NE Alberta Street: Coast Industries, Inc. (1991)**



1991: Coast Industries, Inc. (PDC 1991: 73).



Photo by Michael Grice, October 5, 2015.



**Fig. 4.4. 1028 NE Alberta Street: Love Train Bar & Tavern (1991)**



1991: Love Train Bar & Tavern (PDC 1991: 80).



Photo by Michael Grice, October 5, 2015. Note planted tree.



**Fig. 4.5. 1330 NE Alberta Street: Terrell Brandon's Barbershop (2015)**



1991: 4927 NE 14<sup>th</sup> Ave. (L) and 1330 NE Alberta Street on right (PDC 1991: 87). Note fir tree.



2015: Terrell Brandon's Barbershop on right. Photo by Michael Grice, October 1, 2015.



**Fig. 4.6. 1438 NE Alberta Street: Simmons BBQ (1991)**



1991: Simmons Bar-BQ (PDC 1991: 90).



2015: Tin Shed. Photo by Joshua Davis, September 29, 2015. Note planted trees.



**Fig. 4.7. 1533 NE Alberta Street: New Rose City Cab Co. (1991)**



1991: New Rose City Cab Co., April 1991 (PDC 1991: 26).



Photo by Joshua Davis, September 29, 2015. Note fir tree.



**Fig. 4.8. 1626 NE Alberta Street: Black Educational Center (1991)**



1991: Black Educational Center (PDC 1991: 98). Note litter (Gardner et al. 1992: 4, 133).



2015: 1614 NE Alberta is house on right. Photo by Michael Grice, Oct. 6, 2015. Note fir trees.



**Fig. 4.9. 1630 NE Alberta Street: House of Umoja (1991)**



1991: House of Umoja (PDC 1991: 99). Note planted trees.



Photo by Joshua Davis, September 29, 2015.



**Fig. 4.10. 1700 NE Alberta Street: Texan, Texan II Annex (1991)**



1991: (L-R) 1732 NE Alberta residence, Texan II Annex, Texan (PDC 1991: 100).



Photo by Joshua Davis, September 29, 2015. Note planted trees.

**Fig. 4.11. 1701 NE Alberta Street: Mitchell Plumbing & Courtesy Janitorial (1991)**



1991: 1701 & 1705 NE Alberta: Courtesy Janitorial & Mitchell Plumbing (PDC 1991: 29).



2015: Courtesy Janitorial & No Limits Stickers. Photo by Michael Grice, October 5, 2015.



**Fig. 4.12. 1801 NE Alberta Street: Joe's Place (1991)**



1991: 1801 NE Alberta Street: Joe's Place (PDC 1991: 31).



2015: Solae's Lounge. Photo by Michael Grice, October 5, 2015. Note planted trees.

**Fig. 4.13. 2515 NE Alberta Street: All Teased Up Hair Salon (2015)**



1991: 2515 NE Alberta Street & 5014 NE 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue (yellow house on left) (PDC 1991: 46).



2015: All Teased Up Hair Salon on right. Photo by Michael Grice, October 5, 2015. Note fir tree.



**Fig. 4.14. 2525 NE Alberta Street: 1 More Tyme Inn (1991)**



1991: 1 More Tyme Inn (PDC 1991: 47). Note fir tree and poplars.



2015: Halibut's Restaurant. Photo by Joshua Davis, Sept. 29, 2015. Note fir tree & planted trees.

**Fig. 4.15. 2616 NE Alberta Street: D P Printing (1991)**



1991: P D Printing (PDC 1991: 121). Note vacant land to the right.



2015: Tastemakers Salon. Photograph by Michael Grice, October 5, 2015.



**Fig. 4.16. 2739 NE Alberta Street: Riggins Remodeling (2015)**



1991: Property for sale (PDC 1991: 51). Note fir tree.



2015: Riggins Remodeling. Photo by Michael Grice, October 5, 2015. Note planted trees.

**Fig. 4.17. 2828 NE Alberta Street: Black United Fund of Oregon Building (2015)**



1991: Steven Bryan and Associates, 2828 NE Alberta Street (PDC 1991: 126).



2015: Black United Fund of Oregon Building. Photo by Joshua Davis, Sept. 29, 2015. Note trees.



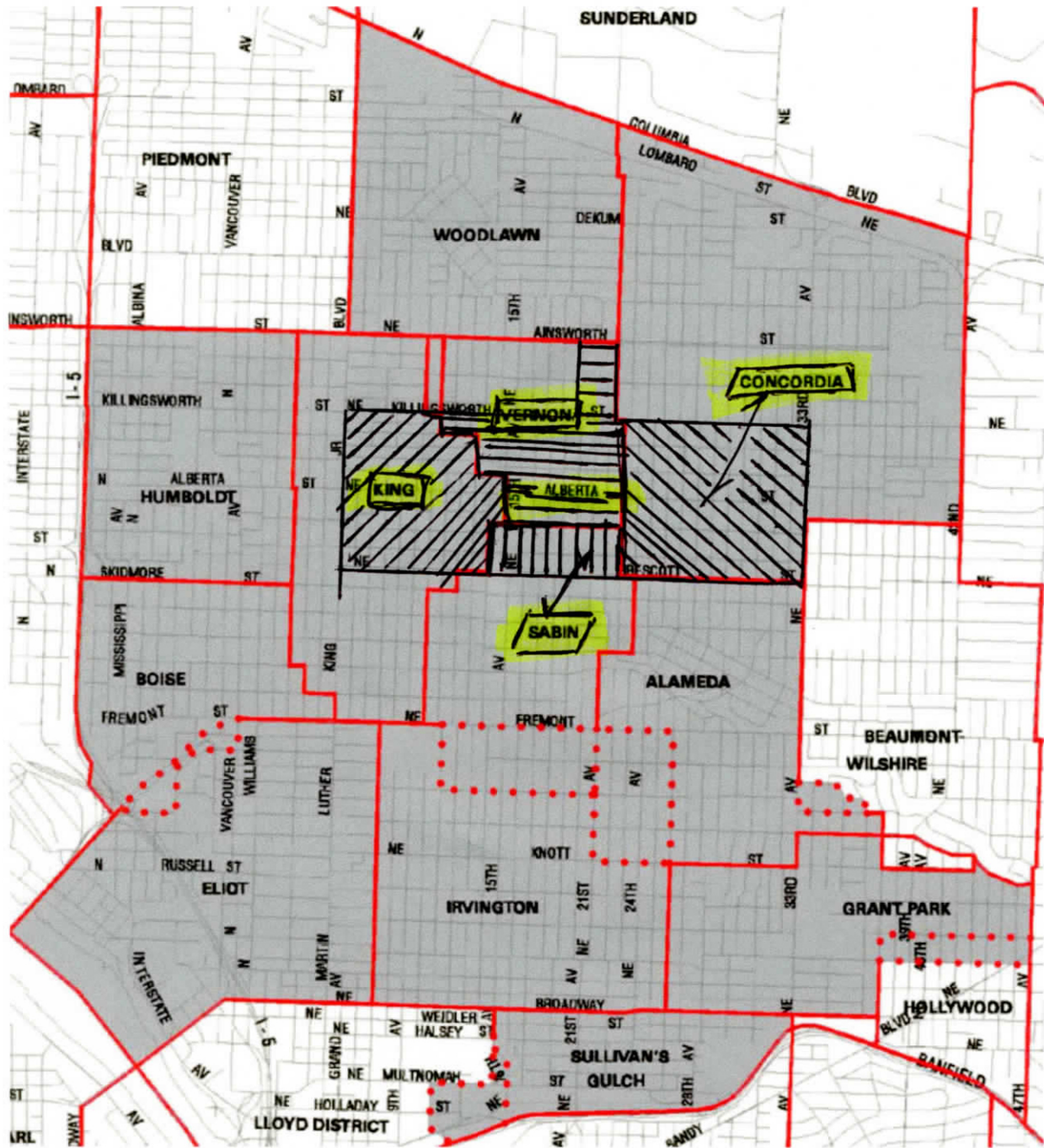
### Effect on Public Safety and Crime Rates, 1993-2013

There is generally an acknowledged relationship between the gentrification process and local crimes; both in the type of crimes committed and in the rates in which they are committed. In the Alberta Street study area, serious crimes and total crime rates have dropped sharply in the past 20 years in apparent inverse relation to the large increase in local property values.

Policing of the Alberta Street study area is centered at the Portland Police Bureau North Precinct (Fig. 4.18), based in the old Fred Meyers store on the corner of NE Killingsworth Street and MLK Blvd. (Gardner et al. 1992: 119). Crime statistics are compiled annually to national standards and are broken down by recognized Neighborhood Associations (see Map 4.3). Currently, the annual reports for the years 1993 through 2013 are available online, and these were used as the source of information for the following four tables, Tables 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7, for the years 1993, 1995, 2000, 2002, 2012, and 2013: [www.portlandoregon.gov/police/29795](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/29795).



**Fig. 4.18. Portland Police Bureau North Precinct HQ. Photo Michael Grice, Oct. 8, 2015.**



<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/oni/48711>

**Map 4.3. Annotated NE Portland Neighborhood and Alberta Street Project Map**

Crimes are listed by the Neighborhood Association to which they belong. In the Alberta Street study area there are portions of four such neighborhoods: Cascadia (Table 4.4), King (Table 4.5), Sabin (Table 4.6), and Vernon (Table 4.7). In



**Table 4.4. Concordia Neighborhood 20-Year Reported Crime Trends, 1993-2013.**

<b>Concordia</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Part I. Personal</b>						
Murder	0	2	1	2	0	0
Rape	9	8	4	2	1	2
Robbery	65	26	20	20	10	5
Assault	157	141	71	56	24	15
<b>Part I. Property</b>						
Burglary	252	136	92	87	75	50
Larceny	350	248	215	287	200	188
Vehicle Theft	220	101	86	28	31	35
Arson	11	9	16	5	1	0
<b>Crime Totals</b>						
<b>Total Part I</b>	<b>1,064</b>	<b>671</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>295</b>
Total Part II	793	740	578	458	247	227
Total Part III	949	1,136	1,130	892	637	552
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2,806</b>	<b>2,547</b>	<b>2,213</b>	<b>1,837</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,074</b>
<b>Rate/1000</b>	<b>280.9</b>	<b>266.0</b>	<b>209.4</b>	<b>173.8</b>	<b>35.8*</b>	<b>30.9*</b>

**Table 4.5. King Neighborhood 20-Year Reported Crime Trends, 1993-2013.**

<b>King</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Part I. Personal</b>						
Murder	1	3	1	0	2	1
Rape	15	11	8	6	4	3
Robbery	130	101	35	58	21	17
Assault	271	280	105	79	30	42
<b>Part I. Property</b>						
Burglary	179	150	73	83	38	29
Larceny	300	312	216	328	240	193
Vehicle Theft	114	102	65	44	26	22
Arson	15	13	9	6	6	1
<b>Crime Totals</b>						
<b>Total Part I</b>	<b>1,025</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>308</b>
Total Part II	1,597	1,383	1,155	776	441	500
Total Part III	2,093	2,538	2,255	1,710	948	1,027
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>4,715</b>	<b>4,893</b>	<b>3,922</b>	<b>3,090</b>	<b>1,756</b>	<b>1,835</b>
<b>Rate/1000</b>	<b>899.5</b>	<b>933.4</b>	<b>709.9</b>	<b>559.3</b>	<b>59.4*</b>	<b>49.9*</b>

general, an understanding of what each of these neighborhoods was like in the early 1990s can be seen in the 1991 Alberta Street Black business photographs: King Neighborhood goes from Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard to 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Figs. 4.1-4.6) Vernon Neighborhood goes from 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue (Figs.

**Table 4.6. Sabin Neighborhood 20-Year Reported Crime Trends, 1993-2013**

<b>Sabin</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Part I. Personal</b>						
Murder	1	2	0	0	0	0
Rape	5	4	3	1	0	1
Robbery	22	18	4	13	2	3
Assault	75	73	24	14	4	2
<b>Part I. Property</b>						
Burglary	83	73	53	60	22	22
Larceny	113	92	99	159	74	72
Vehicle Theft	55	56	24	18	12	13
Arson	5	4	2	3	2	1
<b>Crime Totals</b>						
<b>Total Part I</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>322</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>116</b>	114
Total Part II	331	305	182	204	119	138
Total Part III	492	487	381	324	198	188
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>1,114</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>796</b>	<b>433</b>	<b>440</b>
<b>Rate/1000</b>	<b>266.5</b>	<b>251.1</b>	<b>174.0</b>	<b>179.4</b>	<b>28.3*</b>	<b>27.9*</b>

**Table 4.7. Vernon Neighborhood 20-Year Reported Crime Trends, 1993-2013**

<b>Vernon</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
<b>Part I. Personal</b>						
Murder	3	0	0	0	0	0
Rape	8	7	5	2	0	1
Robbery	42	25	15	8	8	2
Assault	129	123	60	46	12	6
<b>Part I. Property</b>						
Burglary	100	51	34	37	12	9
Larceny	86	81	53	88	57	72
Vehicle Theft	64	35	25	16	6	8
Arson	5	6	5	4	1	0
<b>Crime Totals</b>						
<b>Total Part I</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>98</b>
Total Part II	525	604	406	233	126	85
Total Part III	898	977	781	482	303	228
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,860</b>	<b>1,909</b>	<b>1,384</b>	<b>916</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>411</b>
<b>Rate/1000</b>	<b>702.7</b>	<b>721.2</b>	<b>471.6</b>	<b>312.1</b>	<b>37.6*</b>	<b>38.4*</b>

4.7-4.12), and Cascadia Neighborhood goes from 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (Figs. 4.13-4.17). Sabin Neighborhood forms a relatively small portion of the study area and is located to the south of Alberta Street and is not represented in photos.

**Part I Crimes** are the most serious crimes dealt with by the Portland Police. These include “crimes against persons” of murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. “Crimes against property” under this listing include burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson. These are nationally defined crimes and all municipalities have been required to report them annually to the FBI since 1991.

**Part II Crimes** are also reported nationally on an annual basis and include animal ordinances, simple assault, blackmail, bomb threats, curfew, disorderly conduct, DUI, drug laws, forgery, fraud, gambling, kidnapping, liquor laws, littering, prostitution, runaways, sex crimes (does not include forcible rape and prostitution), stolen property, trespass, vandalism, and weapons laws.

**Part III Crimes** are only reported statewide and include fugitives, officer assaults, protective custody, traffic violations, vehicles and other property recovered in other jurisdictions, and warrants.

**Rate/1000 (\*)** This rate appears to be highly subjective and based on a number of factors other than actual rates of criminal activity. Sometime between 2002 and 2012 this computation was changed from “Crime Rate per 100 Population” (within a given Neighborhood) to “Part I Crime Rate/1,000 Population,” which is why the numbers are significantly smaller between the two dates. Despite these limitations, the numbers are fairly reflective of the differences between major (and minor) crime rates between Neighborhood jurisdictions.

**Concordia Neighborhood Association’s** western boundary is 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue the entire width of the study, so it includes all of the eastern part of the study area: a rectangle bounded by 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue on the west; Killingsworth Street to the north; 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue on the east, and Prescott Street on the south. This is predominantly a residential area with commercial development largely limited to Alberta Street and portions of the perimeter. As evidence by Table 4.4, this is probably the safest and most crime-free major (discounting Sabin) Neighborhood in the study area, with all crime statistics in a steep decline over the 1993-2013 time period.

The **King Neighborhood Association** portion of the study area (Table 4.5) is located west of 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and includes the east side of MLK Blvd. from Prescott Street to Killingsworth Street, the Portland Police Bureau’s North Portland Precinct headquarters (Fig. 4.18), the Piedmont US Post Office, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School. This area consistently has the highest crime rates and crime occurrences in the Alberta Street study area – although all crimes (excepting larceny) have also been in sharp decline since 1993.



The **Sabin Neighborhood Association** portion of the study area is relatively small and almost entirely residential. This Neighborhood – within the study area – is a rectangle bordered by Wygant Street on the north, 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the west, 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue to the east, and including the north side of Prescott Street from 14<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> as its southern boundary. As evidenced by the numbers of reported crimes listed in Table 4.6, the crime rate for this area is even lower than that for the Concordia Neighborhood, likely due to the near absence of business properties and traffic.

The **Vernon Neighborhood Association** portion of the study area is its center and includes Alberta Park, Vernon School, the south side of Killingsworth Street from 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, and the “downtown” portion of Alberta Street from 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. As with the other Neighborhoods in the study area, reported crime has been in sharp decline in the study area the past 20 years (excepting larceny), although it still remains second to Kings Neighborhood in regards to reported crimes and crime rates.

Tom Peavey, a violence prevention officer with Portland Police Bureau, observes:

A grandmother at Woodlawn Park told me, “You want to know what the problem is? You’ve got kids who are angry about the displacement of their families. They hear the frustrations, disappointments, and anger of their parents and families, amplified by poverty and lack of education.” Gentrification plays a huge role in how some of our 18, 19, and 20 year-olds feel about the destabilization of their communities, even if they cannot articulate it.

Wayne Cannon, in his Alberta Street Project interview, recommended:

Encourage kids to get their education to go to school and get good grades -- that's the way to improve the neighborhood and have our youngsters be more involved in church and in school; and of course the other parents and families make a big difference and play a big role. It's all about appearance and conduct, as you know people can wear whatever they want to wear -- and fashion statements are important -- but of course when we were coming up we went to that also, but there weren't as many shootings. You face as much danger for how you appear, so your appearance and your conduct is important because that is particular with African-American youngsters -- people are judging you just on how you show up, how you appear.

### Effect on Local School Demographics, 1997-2013

Local school enrollment patterns are usually a good indicator of the differing numbers of ethnic and racial groups that live in the immediate neighborhood. Portland Public Schools keep good records of school enrollment figures every



Fig. 4.19. Introductory Page to 1992 Alberta Street Report (Gardner et al. 1992: Fig. 1)

year, including the number and grade levels of individual racial groups enrolled in each school at the beginning of each school year. The statistics for the years 1997 through 2014 are available online, and we chose the years 1997, 2000, 2005, 2010 and 2014 to sample and to determine if any demographic trends might be apparent over that 18 year span: [www.pps.k12.or.us/departments/data-analysis/4605.htm](http://www.pps.k12.or.us/departments/data-analysis/4605.htm)

There are two grade schools within the Alberta Street study area, Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary and Vernon Elementary, both in the Jefferson High School “Geographic Area.” Still, many people in the study area attend Grant High School, which is particularly accessible to those living along the 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue corridor.

The following four tables show “ethnic” and total enrollment figures for King, Vernon, Jefferson and Grant schools from 1997 through 2014. The general trends are obvious: school populations are becoming much smaller; individual schools have a sharp divide between Black, White and Latino populations; and the number of Black students in the area is now less than half of what it was in the 1990s.

**Table 4.8. King Elementary School Enrollment Statistics, 1997-2014**

<b>King Elementary [Jefferson]</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>793</b>	<b>733</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>370</b>
African Americans	567	523	341	158	170
<b>% of African Americans</b>	<b>71.5%</b>	<b>71.3%</b>	<b>69.5%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45.9%</b>
American Indians	22	19	6	3	2
Asian Americans	31	32	20	8	4
European Americans	125	90	34	25	37
<b>% of European Americans</b>	<b>15.8%</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>6.9%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>10%</b>
Hispanic Americans	48	69	87	85	119
<b>% of Hispanic Americans</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>32.2%</b>

**Table 4.9. Vernon Elementary School Enrollment Statistics, 1997-2014**

<b>Vernon Elementary [Jefferson]</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>385</b>	<b>376</b>	<b>386</b>
African Americans	330	333	231	166	103
<b>% of African Americans</b>	<b>58.9%</b>	<b>64.3%</b>	<b>60.0%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>26.7%</b>
American Indians	21	20	6	1	2
Asian Americans	21	20	22	15	7
European Americans	106	60	37	98	172
<b>% of European Americans</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>44.6%</b>
Hispanic Americans	82	69	87	67	61
<b>% of Hispanic Americans</b>	<b>14.7%</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>22.6%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>15.8%</b>

**Table 4.10. Grant High School Enrollment Statistics, 1997-2014**

<b>Grant High School</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>1,767</b>	<b>1,794</b>	<b>1,815</b>	<b>1,620</b>	<b>1,503</b>
African Americans	460	367	420	309	196
<b>% of African Americans</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>20.5%</b>	<b>23.1%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>13%</b>
American Indians	18	23	29	13	11
Asian Americans	105	97	100	83	66
European Americans	1,129	1,238	1,192	1,045	978
<b>% of European Americans</b>	<b>63.9%</b>	<b>69.0%</b>	<b>65.7%</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>65.1%</b>
Hispanic Americans	55	69	68	71	115
<b>% of Hispanic Americans</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>

**Table 4.11. Jefferson High School Enrollment Statistics, 1997-2014**

<b>Jefferson High School</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Total Enrollment</b>	<b>985</b>	<b>892</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>493</b>
African Americans	609	591	428	332	281
<b>% of African Americans</b>	<b>61.8%</b>	<b>66.2%</b>	<b>66.2%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>57.0%</b>
American Indians	17	15	18	7	5
Asian Americans	88	67	37	35	4
European Americans	201	137	89	143	93
<b>% of European Americans</b>	<b>20.4%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>13.8%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>18.9%</b>
Hispanic Americans	70	82	75	77	62
<b>% of Hispanic Americans</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>

**King Elementary School** enrollment dropped to only 386 students in 2014, which is less than half of the students enrolled in 1997. During this time Black student enrollment dropped more than three times, from 567 (72% of the total) to only 170 students (46%) – from nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the student body to less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a much smaller population. During the same years, White enrollment also decreased significantly (from 16% to 10%), but Hispanic enrollment more than doubled, from 48 students in 1997 (6% of total) to 119 students in 2014 (32% of total). American Indian and Asian American students also decreased significantly during that time, from 53 combined students in 1997 to only six students in 2014.

**Vernon Elementary School** also had a significant decline in enrollment from 1997 to 2014 (560 to 386), but Black students made up a disproportionate amount of these numbers, dropping more than three times, from 330 students (59%) in 1997 to only 103 (27%) in 2014. Most of this difference was made up by White students, whose numbers increased from 106 (19%) to 172 (45%) during those same years. Hispanic enrollment was fairly stable during that timeframe, while



low-to-begin-with American Indian and Asian American enrollments also declined.

**Grant High School** enrollment figures remained fairly stable when compared to the other schools, dropping from 1,767 total students in 1997 to 1,503 in 2014. Of these, the population of White students also remained fairly consistent, from 1,129 students (64% of the total) in 1997 to 978 students (65%) in 2014. During these same years Black student enrollment dropped by more than half – from 460 students (26%) to only 196 students (13%). This difference was partly made up by Hispanic students, who more than doubled in numbers during the same years: from 55 (3% of total) to 115 (8%).

**Jefferson High School** enrollment also dropped nearly in half from 1997 to 2014, from 985 students to only 493. Black student population followed the same trend, dropping from 609 students (62%) to only 281 students (57% of the total). Same with White students: from 201 enrolled in 1997 (20%) to 93 students in 2014 (19%). The sharpest decline was in Asian American students, from 88 students in 1997 to only 4 in 2014. Much of this latter difference was made up by Hispanic students, whose actual enrollment figures remained fairly stable (from 70 to 62 students), but which constituted a change of 7% of the total in 1997 to nearly 13% in 2014.

Wayne Cannon made this observation during his interview:

Martin Luther King School and Vernon School need to have money put into them so that they can be better. [We also] need more financing to improve the environment and the parks, but the upgrades in the buildings are helping make that happen despite the lack of public funding -- but we need to spend money on the schools and the parks as ways to make things better.

Lisa Bates, a Portland State University faculty member, observed in 2014 (Bates et al. 2014: 52):

But voluntary measures have actually increased segregation by race and class and the unequal quality of schooling persists. Jefferson High—the only majority Black high school in Oregon—has seen no real improvement to its physical building, resources for teaching, or graduation rates, and gentrification in the neighborhood combined with a generous transfer policy mean its enrollment has shrunk to less than half of the school's capacity.

## Effect on Local Church Congregations, 1992-2015

The 1992 Report included an inventory of 17 churches in the study area at that time (Gardner et al. 1992: 44, 140-142). Of these churches, the 1992 report also included their mapped locations and photographs of 12 of them. Table 4.12 lists the 17 1992 church building, their addresses at that time, and their current names. The column titled “Pg.” represents the page number in the 1992 report in which a photograph of the church is located.

**Table 4.12. Alberta Street Study Area Community Churches, 1992-2015.**

<b>Built</b>	<b>1992 Name of Church</b>	<b>Pg.</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Street</b>	<b>2015 Name</b>
1906	Greater Peace Church of God		1637	Alberta	“Collage Arts” (Bus.)
1910	Vernon Presbyterian*	91	4801	19th	Trinity Full Gospel
1910	St. Luke Memorial Church	63	2700	Sumner	Same Church
1911	Highland Baptist Church of God	121	5000	6th	Portland Metro
1917	Vernon Presbyterian*	61	2701	Kllngswth	Genesis Fellowship
1920	Redeemer Lutheran Church	80	5431	21st	Same Church
1926	Highland United Church of Christ	117	4635	9th	Vacant Building
1928	St. Andrews Catholic Church	115	4919	9th	Same Church
1930	Cornerstone Community Church	73	2216	Kllngswth	Same Church
1937	Greater Mt. Calvary Church of God	99	1234	Kllngswth	Daniel’s Memorial
1939	Haigos Missionary Temple	69	2540	Alberta	Apartment Building
1942	Prince of Peace		0617	Alberta	Address Error
1980	Neighborhood Church of God		4550	10th	Address Error
1987	Sharon Seventh Day Adventist	73	5209	23rd	New Construction
1987	Memorial Church of God United		1552	Kllngswth	Don Pedro Fruit Co.
1989	Prayer Center Church	97	4744	15th	Kings Temple
UK	Emanuel Church of God		3017	Wygant	Same Church

\*In 1992, two separate churches were inventoried but given the same name, “Vernon Presbyterian.” This is probably an error and is in the process of being corrected.

Out of 17 Churches listed in 1992, only five remain with the same name and address; five are still churches, but under different names; two have been turned into businesses; two apparently had wrong addresses listed during the inventory, or have relocated; one has been replaced by a new apartment house; one has been demolished and is being replaced with new construction; and one has been boarded up and is vacant. No effort was made to see if newer churches had become active at other addresses within the study area, but there was little obvious indication of such changes. This great amount of transition in local churches likely is a reflection of changing neighborhood demographics, which have their root in gentrification.

Church buildings are some of the most historic and culturally significant structures in the study area, with at least 12 of the 17 buildings having been constructed prior to the Vanport flood in 1948, and all of these likely having a mostly (or completely) White congregation during their formative years. At this time only St. Luke Memorial Church (1910), Redeemer Lutheran Church (1920), St. Andrews Catholic Church (1928), Cornerstone Community Church (1930), and Emanuel Church of God (building date unknown).

Highland Baptist Church of God (Fig. 4.20) is one example of the same church building acquiring a different congregation – at least in name – from 1992 until 2015. The 1911 building has since acquired a new coat of white paint and a new name: Portland Metro Church.

Marnella Bingham observed during her interview:

That [gentrification] had an impact on the things that bind us together such as the churches were some of the population has shifted. As I drive through the Alberta community people don't look like the people who lived there when I first became acquainted with Alberta, which is okay, but then as I see the benefits that accrue to the new population, I feel like those same benefits should accrue to its original population given the increases in the African-American community.

*[Note: Can anyone help identify the children in Fig. 4.19? This photo was used on the very first page of the 1992 Report (Gardner et al 1992: frontispiece) and we believe it was supplied by Elizabeth Winroth of Oregon Historical Society at that time; but current OHS researchers believe it is a fragment from a larger photo, which they now cannot locate.]*

**Fig. 4.20. 5000 NE 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue: Highland Baptist Church of God (1991)**



April 1991: Highland Baptist Church of God (PDC 1991: 5).



September 29, 2015: Portland Metro Church. Photograph by Joshua Davis.



## Summary Opinions

During the formal interviews portion of this research, each of the nine interviewees was asked a series of eight multi-part questions (see Appendix B). Question #7, labeled “Personal Opinions,” had four-parts:

- 1) What are your thoughts and personal opinions on Gentrification?
- 2) How has crime changed [during gentrification] in the neighborhood?
- 3) What can older people do to improve the community?
- 4) What can younger people do to improve the community?

Several of the responses to these questions are quoted in other areas of this report, most notably in the Recommendations section and earlier in this section on gentrification. Here are some additional thoughts:

Bernadette Scott, Coast Industries, Inc.:

Well, it would be good to see more people of color to either rent or own property numbers shrink and to feel like that they are welcome. People like to live and work in the same area so now that many people have moved out or been priced out the chances of Alberta Street returning to its original glory is not very likely.

Ronnie Booker, New Rose City Cab Co.:

You can't stop progress, but let's be fair about it. Once crime was frequent in the neighborhood, but they never bothered us. There was a certain amount of respect. Nobody parked on the lawn or spoke “past you.” Things took place in our neighborhood back in the 70's and 80's to the point that the police wanted to install cameras on our business property, but Mr. Booker, my dad, said “No thanks.” Now it's less crime, but also more violations of respect. The new people park everywhere and don't speak with friendly tones, if at all -- kind of like we're invisible.

Wayne Cannon, Cannon's Rib Express:

I think PDC should help, but I think they should stop handpicking people and make it more accessible and develop a little more fairly; like the Concordia housing project because it's taking care of people in the way that they should be taken care of. So we should take care of them, like that. It is not real satisfying to see the change in terms of what is happened for minorities, but the overall picture is going on from "boarded up" to what is now is a positive change.

Ben Berry, Airship Technologies Group:

Well, on the one hand, this good to grow and benefit the community, but if you change out the people who originally lived there because they can no longer afford the taxes and are pushed out, that is as a downside of gentrification. For as many positive benefits I think there has to be affordable housing provider so no matter what part of the city that you live in there should be set-asides across the whole city for affordable housing.

Terrell Brandon, Terrell Brandon's Barber Shop:

Finally, I'd like to point out that gentrification on Alberta Street's had a positive influence on people's perceptions of one another. We have tended always to be really judgmental about people focus on their appearance, or we might point out someone with tattoo, and yet, that person might be one of most prominent business owners on Alberta Street. I think Alberta Street has changed all that for the better.

Rukaiyah Adams, Meyer Memorial Trust:

It's a privilege for me to say it and I'm going to say it, but here's the bargain, I don't want to be a critic; I want to be a contributor. I want to be an investor. I want to teach people to invest right here. It's important to recognize that you all ain't going back to the antebellum South and we're not going back to Africa -- we're all here together -- as Martin Luther King would say "intertwined in this single garment of destiny."

## **Part V. Alberta Street Cultural Resources, 2015**

The 1992 Alberta Street Report included 51 field inventory maps that showed the documented locations of seven “Community Sites” (community meeting or recreational areas), 17 churches, 10 “Historic Buildings” (buildings more than 50 years of age with significant historical and/or cultural value), seven “Historic Homes,” (residences over 50 years of age), seven “Nehemiah Project” sites, two Schools, and 75 Vacant Lots, for a total of 125 sites.

The focus of the 1992 Inventory was on N/NE Portland Black History, historic buildings, and business opportunities. In that light, the 75 Vacant Lots were seen as relatively inexpensive assets, in that they could be used in a wide variety of manners – including development – that might be of benefit to the local community. By 2015 a large number of these lots had buildings on them or had been converted to commercial uses, such as food carts and event rentals, and were not reconsidered in the current inventory because of time and resource limitations.

### **People**

In 1992 “People” were determined to be the most important category of cultural resources in the Alberta Street study area (Gardner et al. 1992: 40):

People in the community are the most important resource of this inventory. One reason people were chosen is because they are the ones whose ideas could actually make a difference for the neighborhood in a positive way. Documenting and submitting ideas about the community could eventually bring on change to enhance the Alberta area.

Three basic groups of people important to the Black History of Alberta Street were identified: 1) those people whom the students personally interviewed; 2) other living people who were important to the community; and 3) people who were no longer living, but had left an important legacy behind. In the first category was Baby Alexander, Doc Baldwin, Berria Brooks, Richard Sevier, and Joyce Allen Strachan (they also listed the children that were interviewed, who would all be in their 30’s now: Laron Howard, Angela Jones; Kevin Spencer, Elijah Stroud, and Keenan Yarborough); the second category also included Richard Sevier, as well as Sam Brooks; and the third category named

Chief Casino, J. A. Merriman, and York.

The current inventory focused on Black businesses, so interviewees were selected on the basis of being long-time and successful members of the local business community with strong ties and interests in the Alberta Street Neighborhood. By following the same format in 2015, the first category of people – those that we had formally interviewed or had met personally during the course of research – would include almost everyone listed in Table 2.1 (Rukaiyah Adams, Ben Berry, Marnella Bingham, Terrell Brandon, Sam Brooks, Simone Brooks, Wayne Cannon, Ernest Harris, and Bernadette Scott), as well as Donny Adair, Will Bennett, Nate Hartley, and Kevin Modica from Table 2.2.

A number of the people interviewed and referenced in 1992 have since passed on, so the second list of important people has expanded considerably, and partly because of the current focus on successful business people and partly because of the greater number of adults being interviewed.

Ernest Harris:

People that we looked up to: Mr. [Arthur] Palmer, Henry D. Scott, Nate Hartley, Mr. [Floyd] Booker; those guys hired everybody. Mr. Booker took an attitude if you want to start a janitorial company, he would invite you to his office and sit you down and ask you “What would you like to know?” And then, tell you everything that you need to know . . . His philosophy was that there’s enough money out here for everybody to make a living! So he would be very happy to help you and that’s unlike a lot of people who are more selfish and self-centered today.

Sam Brooks:

Manuel and Henry Scott were brothers and the most successful African-American businessmen that I can recall, and their business was called Coast Janitorial (Fig. 4.3; Table 4.2).

Simone Brooks:

To begin with, my dad Sam Brooks. He’s quite an accomplished man from rural Tennessee. My dad made the inroads to help people understand how to run a business, how to make a go of it in Portland.



The advice shared with others that I did overhear; those conversations have since informed my leadership so I really respect the amount of time that he, as an example, gives back to the community.

Terrell Brandon:

[I was influenced by] The Tin Shed (Fig. 4.6; Table 4.2) run by Ms. Roslyn Hill at the beginning, and I began to imitate and inquire from her how to maintain my business and my business profile. She gave me a lot of good advice. Everybody was important to me, but Roslyn Hill stood out. The business that the Roslyn Hill managed was called the Tin Shed, a tiny little beginning on 14th as a combination coffee shop and café card shop. She gave me a lot about customer service -- and she's still there.

Wayne Cannon:

Well, I don't know the man's last name [Joseph Benjamin], but he is a property owner on Alberta Street at a place that used to be called Joe's Place on 18<sup>th</sup> (Fig. 4.12; Table 4.2) and I understand that he still owns this property. He's one of the few people that still owns his property that didn't go for the people buying him out and putting him out of business. I have the utmost respect for him because of the position he took in that. He is one of the people who then was kind of an anchor for me as a long-term business owner and property owner. Luis [Moreno] Louise from La Sirenita is a very dear friend of mine and I have another friend named Dave [McKay] who runs the Halibut's Restaurant on Alberta (Fig. 4.14; Table 4.2) and I admire both those men for their generosity and willingness to help; in their being consistent and stable partners in the Alberta community.

Not everyone listed by the interviewees was in business, however. Rukaiyah Adams singled out another person who made a strong impression on her:

One man in particular crossing guard very committed and visible individual named Ray Proctor. Raymond Proctor is a bicycle-riding black man, light-skinned and well before the bicycling craze. He was definitely interested in kids and provided a supplement to the schools as a volunteer safety crossing guard and worked for the schools getting kids on and off buses at Harriet Tubman Middle School.

## Local Business and Job Opportunities

A key focus of the 2015 Alberta Street inventory was Black-owned business formation and African American student employment opportunities. In that regard, crew members attended and reported on the 2015 OAME Youth Entrepreneurship conference on August 6<sup>th</sup> (Fig. 5.1), formally interviewed and corresponded by email with nine local African American business people (Table 2.1), photographed all -- and made direct contact with most -- of the businesses on Alberta Street (Part IV), and connected with all study area businesses who had Facebook pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/Alberta.Street.Project>

In addition to actively networking with successful local business people and other expert professionals, the crew used evaluations of individual properties during field inventories to identify potential business and job opportunities. This process is described in Part II Methods “Field Observation, Documentation & Evaluation” and resulted in the construction of the following six choropleth maps.



**Fig. 5.1. Sam Brooks & Alberta Street Project Crew, August 6, 2015**

These maps visually locate those portions of the study area offering most neighborhood job or business opportunities in the fields of light carpentry, construction, house painting, landscaping, concrete and asphalt repair, and tree care. These occupations all involve reasonably paid labor that can mostly be performed with basic equipment and rudimentary training, and all result in improved neighborhood environments. In addition, each of these opportunities can be pursued via existing businesses, through new business formations, or on an individual basis by directly contacting landowners, lessees, and renters.

Choropleths made from individual job and business opportunities presented by each building that was inventoried and evaluated. Basic job types included light construction (“Repairs”), house painting (“Painting”), lawn and shrubbery maintenance (“Landscaping”), tree planning, planting, and maintenance (“Trees”), and street and sidewalk repair (“Streets”). A sixth category (“Totals”) represents the total points given to each address, providing an over-all general view of where the greatest job opportunities are most likely located.

**Repairs & Painting (Map 5.1).** Both of these choropleths show scattered properties along Alberta Street and along 7<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, and 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenues in need of minor repairs and painting. By contrast, MLK Blvd. and 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue appear to be in mostly very good condition in these regards. Very few of the properties are coded Red, which would indicate an immediate need of major repairs or painting.

**Landscaping & Tree Care (Map 5.2).** As might be expected, no landscaping (Black) is needed through most of the Alberta Street business area, indicating very few lawns or shrubs to maintain in this area. Most landscaping needs seem to be concentrated in the residential areas of 7<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>, and 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenues, but only a few scattered properties on 15<sup>th</sup> and on 31<sup>st</sup> seem to indicate an immediate need for these services. Tree care is needed wherever trees are located, though, including a series of relatively young street trees planted along MLK Blvd. and Alberta Street since the 1992 inventory. The most immediate need for tree care (Red) is along 7<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 31<sup>st</sup> Avenues. This likely indicates: 1) trees planted under powerlines; 2) trees growing into powerlines; 3) large, potentially dangerous, conifers growing near homes; and 4) older trees causing damage to sidewalks and/or streets.

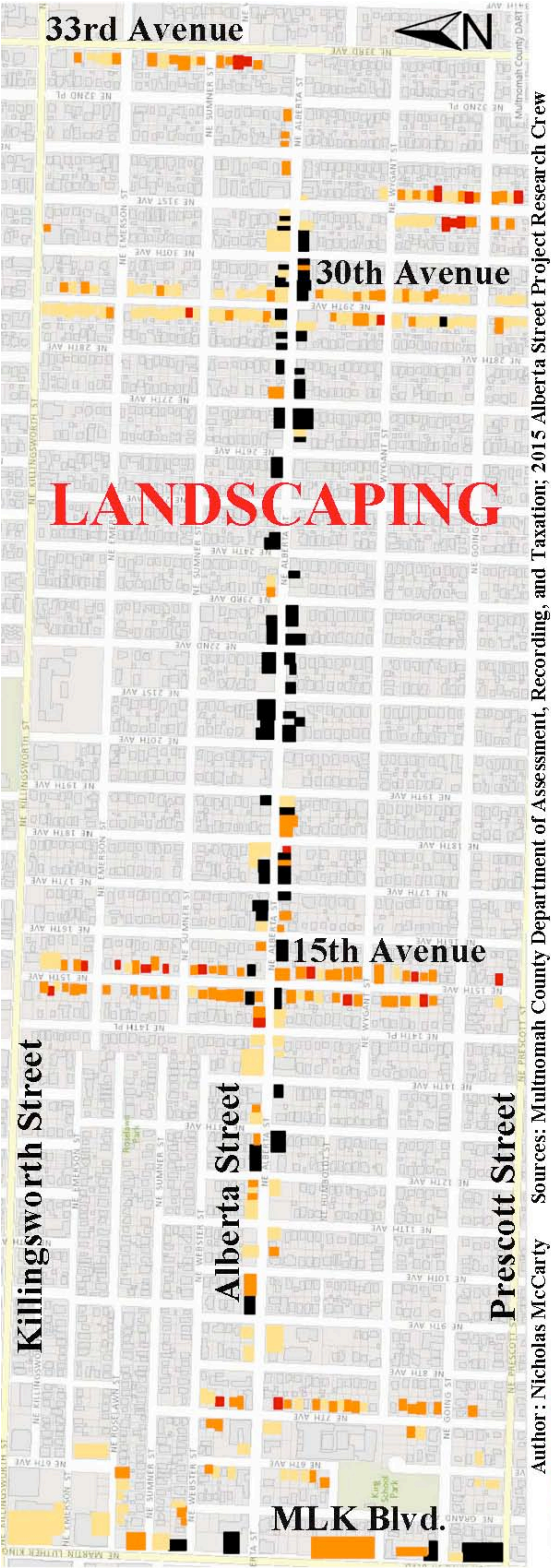
**Streets & Totals (Map 5.3).** The Streets choropleth shows very few locations within the study area requiring immediate (Red) attention to the repair and/or maintenance of adjacent streets and sidewalks. Several areas, in fact, appear to be in very good shape: MLK Blvd.; several stretches of Alberta Street; 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue north of Alberta; 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue south of Alberta, and 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue all appear to be in





Map 5.1. Alberta Street Building Repairs & Painting Opportunities





Map 5.2. Alberta Street Landscaping & Tree Care Opportunities





Map 5.3. Alberta Street Sidewalks, Streets & Total Opportunities

relative good repair. Alberta Street between 8<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Avenues, 16<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Avenues, and 26<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> Avenues; all of 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue; and 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of Alberta all appear in need of relatively minor work on streets and sidewalks, possibly associated with overgrown trees or new construction in those areas.

The Totals choropleth is based on the following distribution of the 483 evaluations used in this inventory, based on adding all five evaluations for each tax lot:

3 = 23	<u>6 = 93</u>	<u>7 = 101</u>	8 = 74
4 = 44	1 = Beige	2 = Orange	9 = 43
<u>5 = 57</u>			10 = 22
Total = 124			11 = 16
0 = Black			12 = 6
			<u>13 = 4</u>
			Total = 165
			3 = Red

124 (Black) + 93 (Beige) + 101 (Orange) + 165 (Red) = 483 Total Evaluations

Theoretically, these combined Totals numbers should show the areas with the greatest general needs for good paying entry-level work, whether as an employee, business owner, or independent contractor. The distribution is weighted somewhat toward the Red (critical) area, but gives a good idea as to where most work is generally needed. MLK Blvd. and Alberta Street from 15<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> Avenues, as might be expected, appear to be in relatively good condition with little opportunity for these types of services. The greatest needs appear to be on 7<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, and 31<sup>st</sup> Avenues. An examination of the other maps indicates that the greatest needs in these areas are landscaping, tree care, and street and sidewalk repair. Without revisiting these locations, it appears reasonable that older street trees might be causing damage to adjacent streets and sidewalks.

If these interpretation are accurate, then that would be a good indication that this type of property evaluation might be a useful tool for community planners, businesses dealing in these types of services, new business formations, and independent contractors.

## Historical Buildings Inventory

A key focus of the 1992 Report was the photographs, addresses and mapped locations of historical buildings in the study area. Historical buildings were those defined as having been built more than 50 years ago – or prior to 1942 at that time. Now, 23 years later, that 50-year date has become 1965 and the number of buildings remaining from the 1942 to 1965 time period has increased by the dozens, or even hundreds. The post-WW II housing boom and a rapidly expanding economy resulted in major residential and commercial developments all over the US – including N/NE Portland and large portions of the Alberta Street study area. This has created an opportunity to evaluate many new homes, businesses and neighborhoods in the study area for their historical and cultural significance, and particularly with an African American focus.

Most of the churches, other historical buildings, schools and businesses documented in 1992 are discussed or illustrated in Part IV of this report, along with several dozen other structures mostly related to current businesses. Interviewees expressed the following opinions regarding buildings that they think are significant:

Bernadette Scott:

Well I like the Rosslyn Hill's properties and mirrors the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> in Alberta with the bookstore and eating establishments (Fig. 4.6; Table 4.2), and although she's not very visible, most places are not all populated by African-Americans. She is the owner. Then, of course, Jack's famous chicken (Alberta Market, Table 4.2; see Appendix C) -- everybody knows that one!

Rukaiyah Adams:

I guess the most prominent, that most actively sticks in my mind, is the shows place on Alberta, is the Alberta [Rose] Theater (Fig. 3.14; Table 4.2), which was the Alameda Theater on 30<sup>th</sup> and Alberta. Another building was St. Andrew's Church (Table 4.12).

Sam Brooks:

Alberta Rose Theater (Fig. 3.14; Table 4.2). The John Garlington Building at the foot of Alberta [across the street from the study area on MLK Blvd.] was a considered it one time to be the "Gateway" to Alberta Street.



Simone Brooks:

Well, our own building on the corner 11<sup>th</sup> and Alberta used to be a utility building for the phone company (Table 4.2); and I think the Playhouse Theatre on Prescott and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue [across the street from the study area]; and, although I don't like the food, the Radio Room (Table 4.2) restaurant is a good use of space.

Wayne Cannon

The music education project for Martin Luther King School (Table 4.8) where Grammy Award winning composer Thara Memory is working with the elementary youth program makes King School one of my favorite buildings. I especially liked the initiative that he has shown: a new picture of young people. Alberta Park is also one of my favorite places in the area that has changed quite a bit for the positive.

## Community Places

In 1992, Alberta Park, the intersection of 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Alberta Street, schools, churches and “the Fred Meyer’s store” (now the North Precinct Police Station; Fig. 4.18) were frequently mentioned as important community meeting places (Gardner et al. 1992: 41):

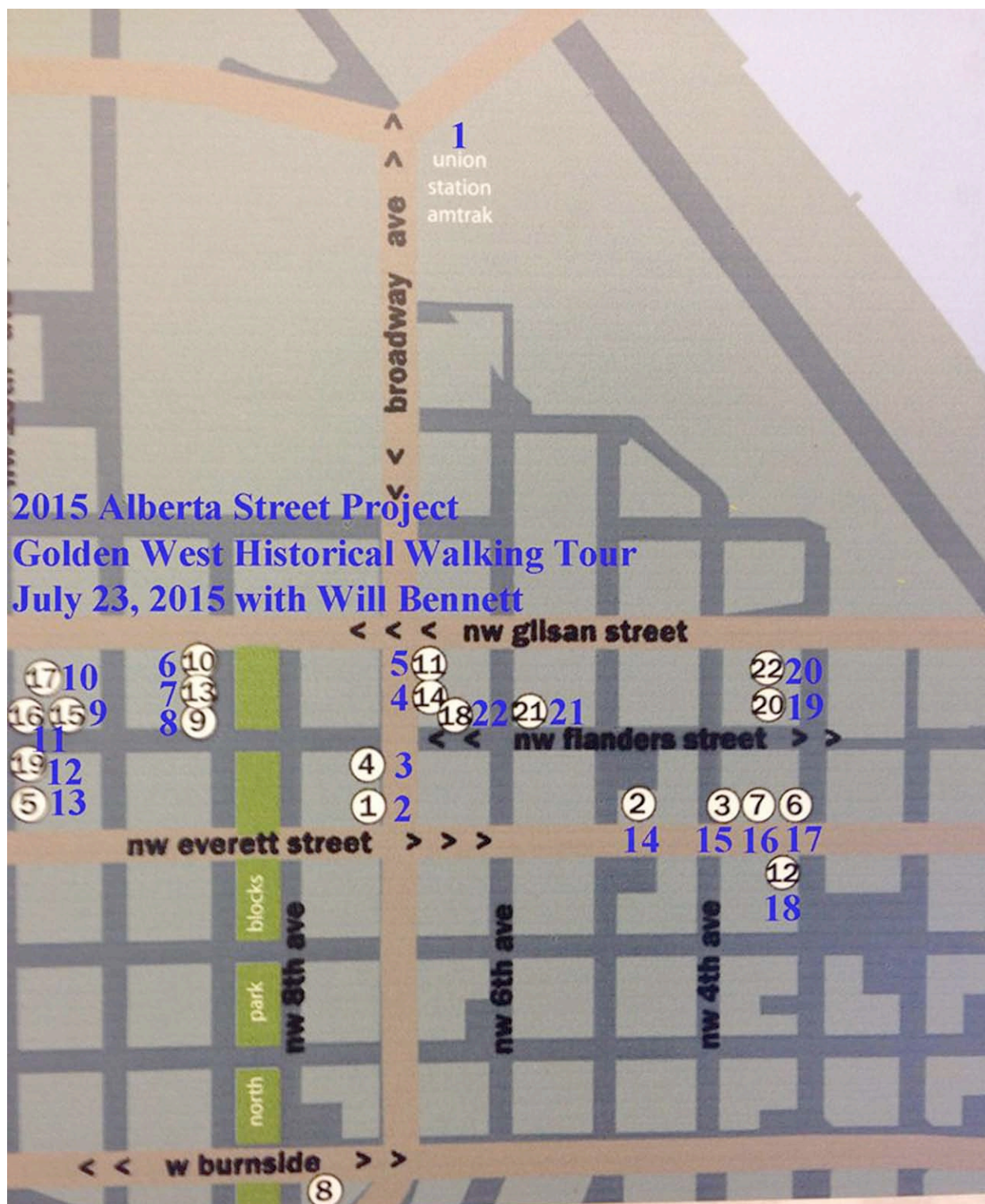
We felt that the second most important cultural resources are places in the Alberta district. Alberta Park was the most popular place mentioned by two older and two younger people. Samona Stroud asked Joyce Allen Strachan (an older person) what her favorite place was and she said, “Alberta Park, its [sic] a really nice place.” Samona asked. “What can we do to make it better?” Joyce said, “have people patrol the gangs around the park so people can feel they have some sort of freedom when they go with their families” (Strahan, Personal Communication, 1992). A few other favorite places mentioned were 15th & Alberta, churches, schools, stores (especially the Fred Meyers), businesses and “friend’s houses.” No vacant lots were mentioned.

**15<sup>th</sup> and Alberta** was not mentioned in 2015, but it remains a busy corner with a frequently used bus stop, is the western boundary of Last Thursday celebrations, includes the popular Tin Shed (Fig. 4.6), and is close walking distance to New Rose City Cab Co. (Fig. 4.7), Terrell Brandon’s Barber Shop (Fig. 4.5), and many other restaurants, beauty salons, art galleries in the immediate neighborhood.

**Alberta Park** remains a popular gathering place for local residents and families and was mentioned by several interviewees. Unwanted gang activity has largely been eliminated at the park since 1992 according to most accounts.

**Golden West Historical District** (Map 5.4) in downtown Portland is not included in the study area, but is a significant neighborhood regarding African American history and culture in Portland and in Oregon. A walking tour of this area led by Will Bennett (Table 2.2) on July 28 convinced crew members that this is an important group of historical buildings (especially the Railroad Station and the Golden West Hotel), and should receive greater attention from the local Black community.

**Kelley Point Park**, at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers, is another location outside the boundaries of the study area that crewmembers



**Map 5.4. Golden West Historical District: July 23, 2015 Walking Tour**

thought should be added as a significant place for local African Americans because of its close association with York (Fig. 3.2) in 1806 and with the earliest known Black History in the Portland area. Crewmembers toured this area on August 13

and documented their findings on the Project Facebook page, as they did with the Golden West tour – both as preparation for future inclusion on the project website. Fig. 5.2 shows local experts Ron Craig, who is an authority on York and early Oregon history, and archaeologist Melissa Darby, who discussed the native foods eaten by Lewis & Clark Expedition members as we ate them for lunch: wapato, elk meat, smoked Chinook and steelhead, and blue huckleberries. This was a method of learning about history by taste, aroma, texture, and aesthetics; not just words.

Marnella Bingham also mentioned other, more local, locations:

There was the “Royal Esquire Club” as well as Joe's Place, which had been the Town Clown (Fig. 4.12) . . . There was an arts center across from Joe's Place. Don Johnson provided a combination of arts and tennis for young people and a consulting center also, at the intersection of 18<sup>th</sup> and Alberta Street.



**Fig. 5.2. Crewmembers and Local Experts at Kelley Point Park**  
Photograph by Deborah Moore, August 13, 2015



## Events and Activities

Events and activities were determined by the 1992 crew to be the least important of the cultural resources that they inventoried, possibly because of adverse conditions that existed in the neighborhood at that time (Gardner et al. 1992: 43):

Events and activities are the fifth and last important cultural resource category listed for our project. The younger and the older persons said their favorite activitie[s] and events were having picnics at the [Alberta] park, hanging out at 15th & Alberta, having block parties and family celebrations. A young person answered very honestly to the question, "What kind of activities do you enjoy in the Alberta area?," said "playing outside and watching t.v." (Howard, Personal Communications, 1992).

By 2015 things had changed considerably in the Alberta Street study area, including an infusion of restaurants, coffee shops, art galleries, beauty salons, barbershops, tattoo shops, and other businesses attracting groups of shoppers and visitors. In addition, two popular events – the Alberta Street Fair and Last Thursdays – have become a regular part of the social fabric of the community since 1992. During the summer we researched local restaurants, spent an entire evening documenting a Last Thursday event, and maintained an information table at the Alberta Street Fair. All of these activities were reported, with photographs, on the project Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Alberta.Street.Project>

**\$10 Restaurant Reviews.** For most weeks during the summer, the Alberta Street crew performed a “\$10 Restaurant Review” at a local restaurant or other popular eating place (Fig. 5.3), grading each experience with a weighted average and then posting the results on the Facebook page. Budgets were held to \$10 per person, including \$8.50 for food and drinks and \$1.50 minimum tip (18%) on the order. In this manner, local reviews were performed on popular local eateries featuring Italian pizza (Bella Facia Pizzeria), Mexican burritos (La Sirenita), Jack’s “\$5” fried chicken (Alberta Market), barbecue (Cannon’s Rib Express), French food (Petite Provence), and Thai (Cha’ba Thai).

Appendix C contains three sample reviews, including examples of the weighted averages that were used to grade each location. By most accounts, this was a successful method of highlighting local attractions in the neighborhood on a relatively modest budget and was well received and appreciated by the local businesses that were featured.



**Fig. 5.3. Crewmembers conducting first “\$10 Restaurant Review” on Alberta Street**  
 Photograph by Nicholas McCarty

**Alberta Street Fair** [Report by Deborah Moore]: “August 8, 2015, the Alberta Street Project team enjoyed a day spent outdoors talking to the residents and friends of the Alberta Street community. Joshua Davis and Deborah Moore distributed flyers about the 2015 Cultural Resource Inventory report that is due the end of September. Information was shared about the 1992 Alberta Street report to show how different the Alberta Street neighborhood has changed in 23 years.

“There was a lot of foot traffic by the Albert Street Project booth. Davis and Moore enjoyed the conversations shared by the public and random residents of Portland and cities outside of Oregon. The feedback about the changes that has happened in the Alberta area varied person to person. James Huddleston, a NW Portland resident wasn’t happy about the changes and gentrification he’s witnessed. He said, ‘Big money doesn’t have a place to displace people out

of the neighborhood.'

"The Black United Fund of Oregon did a public unveiling of a mural painted on the building by local Portland artists [Eatcho and Jeremy Nichols]. Many people stopped by to take pictures and listened to Executive Director, Kimberly Sheng of the Black United Fund of Oregon speak. The Alberta Street Fair was a very enjoyable event and very well attended."



**Fig. 5.4. New Mural Celebrating African American Women's History on BUF Building**  
Photo by Michael Grice, October 18, 2015

**Last Thursdays.** [Facebook Report] The 2015 Alberta Street Project crew documented Last Thursday events on Alberta Street while also conducting an inventory of affected businesses during the evening of July 30, 2015. Photos were made of directly affected businesses and informative one-page Alberta Street Project flyers were handed out to local business people in exchange for their business cards.



The day was exceptionally hot and muggy and temperatures reached over 100 degrees. We conducted field research from 5:00 PM to 9:30 PM, during which time the temperature never got below 90 degrees. Everyone drank a lot of water while taking photographs and making notes.

Despite the heat, several thousand people were estimated to have attended the event. Participants were ethnically and culturally diverse and seemed to enjoy themselves. Relatively few attendees appeared to be under 16, and the majority seemed to be in the 16 to 40 age range.

Musicians, dancers, painters, and other artists performed for the crowd and occasionally traded their wares for money. Art galleries were packed, with a steady stream of viewers.

Alberta Street was closed to through traffic from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM for the event. Police presence was noticeable and helpful. There were no negative confrontations that we witnessed, and perhaps City participation was a factor.

Several businesses were closed for the event, but many others were open for business and doing well. Some of the bars in particular were crowded and the Salt and Straw ice cream shop and Pine State Biscuits had long lines.

Almost everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves.

Ernest Harris, New Rose City Cab Co.:

I do the last Thursday events. What I do is have a lot of black bands and stuff like that. Whenever black people are here we get to the point that they are doing something the city always finds a way to shut them down or attempt to set them down, but we focus on compliance to minimize the effect of city bureaus trying to shut you down and deny you liquor licenses. We work hard to stay in compliance.



## **Vegetation and Wildlife**

In 1992 several interviewees mentioned trees and squirrels as some of their favorite vegetation and wildlife in the study area. Specific trees mentioned were red maples and plum trees. One child, Angela Jones, said blackberry bushes were her favorites, and an older person, Baby Alexander, said: “I would like to see colorful birds and more squirrels and more exotic plants and trees” (Gardner et al. 1992: 42-43). In 2015 little mention was made of squirrels, but several people mentioned crows (good and bad) and trees and other birds were still popular:

Rukaiyah Adams:

There were programs out of St. Andrews Nativity School on bird watching, and we would walk around the neighborhood and observe different kinds of birds and classify them. I still love birds.  
[“Other wildlife?”] Well, possums and the birds, but not much of wildlife. The crows have it during the day, possums during the night.

Sam Brooks:

Birds are just wonderful! Anything else . . . Crows are a nuisance . . . Trees that grow up -- but not out! If we aren't careful when trees are planted trees instead of going up, are growing out and creating problems with wires . . .

Terrell Brandon:

Well, being from Portland, I'm always big on roses, red roses, white roses, and yellow roses. I like all of them. Peninsula Park provides a great Rose Garden . . . Whether good or bad in the neighborhood, you will probably see a lot of crows, but that's part of life and we see a lot of birds.

Ben Berry:

I believe that the trees are the most significant because I'm comparing them to my experience in Los Angeles. These magnificent trees and the forests are one of the things that make it so beautiful [here].

## **Part VI. 1992 Project Updates**

The 1992 Report featured five projects in place or being proposed at that time that could impact the Alberta Street study area in a positive way: Project Alberta, Peace Trees, The Albina Plan, Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Exposition, and the Nehemiah Project. Here are current updates on these projects, so nearly as can be determined at this time. Efforts to learn the outcomes of some of these projects have become difficult with the passage of time, but efforts are still being made to obtain more accurate information for the project website.

### **Project Alberta**

Project Alberta was initiated in 1990 by the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs (OAME) with a request to the Portland Development Commission (PDC) to identify the business landowners along Alberta Street from MLK Blvd. to 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, the current zoning in place for those parcels, and the current use of those parcels. The subsequent 1991 2-volume PDC report (PDC 1991) has been used as much of the basis for this 2015 report for Repeat Photographs and for 1991 property market values (Tables 4.1 and 4.3).

According to the authors and Sam Brooks in 1992 (Gardner et al. 1992: 126):

The purpose of the project is to stabilize, rebuild, and reinforce the North and Northeast communities where needed. It is important for the people in the community to be more aware of their neighborhood before it gets worse. The expectations of the Alberta plans are to have some international food restaurants [sic], retail stores and minority owned businesses.

By all outward appearances, Project Alberta was a success, a perspective recently echoed by Brooks, but with the caveat that there had been “unforeseen consequences,” an apparent reference to gentrification issues that accompanied the revitalization plan.

## Peace Trees

Peace Trees was/is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to conducting environmental restoration projects in countries around the world. In 1992 members of this organization apparently came to the conclusion that N/NE Portland needed more trees. In this regard, Alberta Street seemed to need their services, possibly through contact with Sam Brooks and in conjunction with his Project Alberta Plans. Here is how the project was described in the 1992 Report (Gardner et al 1992: 129):

*The Peace trees is a non-profit organization that is volunteering time and effort to carry out environmental restoration projects all over the world. Between 1992 and 1996, the Peace Trees hope to bring thousands of young people to the Cascadia bioregion (the northwestern United States. and British Columbia • Canada) to restore certain areas in those regions. They hope to accomplish many, if not all of the restorations that are designated.*

*The group lives and works together. They learn about different cultural backgrounds, racial differences, politics, and language. The program is not only to restore the sites, but to bring people of different races, and cultural backgrounds together.*

*100 men and women between the ages of 18-22 will begin the first project between August 15 - September 15. They come from Central America, the Middle East, Japan, Europe, Canada, and the United States to work on stream rehabilitation, erosion control, tree-planting, and trail building initiatives in Eugene, Corvallis, Oregon; Tacoma, Washington; and the Olympic National Forest in Washington State.*

*Peace Trees will be working with the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs to plant at least 100 trees between Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Northeast 33rd. Around 30-40 young people will be needed to break asphalt, dig holes, water, stake and plant these trees.*

Given the large amount of young street trees now growing along Alberta Street, it is possible that they had their origin in this project. Efforts are now being made to follow up on this possibility to better gauge the success or failure of this effort.

## The Albina Plan

The 1992 “Albina Plan” was an ambitious project on the part of the City of Portland to improve conditions in N/NE Portland. In retrospect, it is also worth reconsidering what was written about the Albina Plan by the teen-aged Alberta Street Project student researchers in 1992 (Gardner et al. 1992: 128):

*The Portland Planners are planning to give Albina a whole new look. They said that they want to work with the community*

*from the Portland Public Schools to police, from the Coalition of Black Men to the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs, from the Portland Development Commission to the city of Portland. Together, the occasional cacophony of gang gun-fire in the night could be replaced in the 19-square-mile Albina community by a symphony of construction work, retail, and light industrial traffic. (Oregonian newspaper article) [no date or page number given]*

*Me personally [sic] I think that it is a great plan and I wish that more people would get involved in these kind of projects. Most of the people who want this kind of project to work are people who don't live in the neighborhood that the project is being conducted in. The people that reside in the community have little if any participation in the project. Some of the people have very good ideas. I know because I have heard lot of ideas about neighborhood changes. The only reason that they don't get heard is because that they don't say anything.*

*When someone from a different neighborhood comes and tries to make changes in a neighborhood that he does not know what the people's needs or want's [sic] for a better neighborhood. I feel that they should talk to the people who live in the neighborhood and ask them what they want in their neighborhood to make it better or to fit their needs for a better and cleaner neighborhood.*

These sentiments were strongly stated in 1992 through several of the discussions student researchers had with the interviewees and during field research. A common concern was that “people from Lake Oswego” were dictating plans for the community without first bothering to involve local residents who would be subjected to the plans. As with the Peace Trees initiative, current efforts are being made to determine what the actual outcomes of this plan were.



## Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Exposition

The 1992 Alberta Street cultural resource inventory was conceived, planned and completed under the auspices of Urban Forestry, Inc., (UFI) an Oregon-based nonprofit founded by Bob Zybach and Michael Grice. UFI was also active in other local efforts in the late 1980s and early 1990s to improve local understanding of Portland Black History and to provide enhanced opportunities for Oregon minority students to obtain better educations and meaningful employment.

One of UFI's most visible accomplishments was its leadership in getting the name of the Golden West Hotel restored and an interpretive sign regarding its African American history placed on an outer wall for public viewing. Another success was the completion of the 1992 Alberta Street Project inventory and report. Not all UFI project efforts were successful, though, including the proposed Lewis and Clark Bicentennial commemoration. That proposal was unable to secure either funding or public support despite its worthwhile intentions. Here is how the failed proposal was described in the 1992 Report:

*A January 30, 1990 letter to Portland Mayor Bud Clark announced the outline of a 15-year plan to rejuvenate NINE Portland by using the bicentennial anniversary of the Lewis and Clark expedition as the focus for an international celebration. The model would be the 1905 Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition that took place in NW Portland. These plans were also conveyed to Oregon Historical Society director, William Trampusch, at the same time. The primary concerns identified in the letter were:*

*Portland State University's 1987 "Portland's Changing Landscape," and the September, 1989 "Discussion Draft: Albina Community Plan Process Report," reveals some disturbing omissions [sic] from current plans and assessments: 1) the attention paid to African American cultural needs is virtually nonexistent; 2) educational and professional opportunities for economically disadvantaged citizens are hardly addressed, much less planned for, and 3) natural resource management is completely ignored.*

*Since that time Urban Forestry, Inc. has been using the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Celebration as a framework to: 1) create long term construction and landscaping projects, 2) develop possible financing opportunities for new business formations, 3) "identify the cultural, economic, scientific, and*

*aesthetic benefits of using native vegetation for community landscaping, and 4) identify related educational and business opportunities for inner-city residents.*

*This project (1992 Alberta Street Cultural Resource Inventory) is a direct outgrowth of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Exposition. The primary purpose of the proposal can also be quoted from the Clark letter:*

*It is essential that we have better educated and better financed families and citizens as role models and mentors for Portland's next generation of young adults. A 15-year planning framework provides the needed time for addressing both concerns.*

*The 1905 Exposition demonstrated that large financial investments can be garnered for ventures of this type, and that positive long-term community improvements can result from such investments.*

Portland's actual participation in the Bicentennial were very muted in relation to this proposal, and the 1905 Exposition was occasionally referenced, but no effort was made to duplicate the past success, nor were any of the UFI suggestions adopted.

## Nehemiah Project

The Nehemiah Project was founded in 1989 by the Northeast Community Development Corporation (NECD) with a US Department of Housing and Urban Development \$3.75 million Nehemiah Housing Opportunities Grant. The grant provided an interest free second mortgage and a \$15,000 reduction on the construction of 100 new and rehabilitation of 150 homes throughout Northeast Portland, including at least seven homes in the Alberta Street study area.

In 1992 Jacki Walker was the executive director of NECDC and gave Alberta Street principals a tour of the seven houses under construction at that time: “Our tour of Nehemiah Project homes showed us how well the program is working. The homes looked great, could be afforded by low-income families, and also caused local neighbors to take care of their own homes and lawns” (Gardner et al. 1992: 132).

**Fig. 6.1. Two Nehemiah Project Homes: NE 12<sup>th</sup> & NE 13<sup>th</sup> Avenues**



4841 NE 12<sup>th</sup> Ave.

5045 NE 13<sup>th</sup> Ave.

Photos by Michael Grice, October 5, 2015



**Fig. 6.2. Four Nehemiah Homes: NE 14<sup>th</sup> Place & NE 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> Avenues**



Photos by Michael Grice, October 5, 2015

Today the homes remain occupied, are being maintained in good condition (see Figs. 6.1 and 6.2) and each carry a current market value, according to the Portland Assessment and Taxation Department, in the \$300,000+ range (Table 6.1). On the surface it would appear as if this was a very successful project, although it remains possible that the original owners were also displaced during the gentrification process of the past two decades. NECDC building #29



was also included in the 1992 inventory, but could not be located at the address given in the report at that time (Gardner et al. 1992: 141).

**Table 6.1. Tax & Market Values of 1992 Nehemiah Project buildings, 2014**

<b>Address</b>	<b>1992 NECDC</b>	<b>2014 Assessed</b>	<b>2014 Market</b>
4841 NE 12 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	#27	\$108,000	\$329,000
5045 NE 13 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	#18	\$143,000	\$330,000
5226 NE 14 <sup>th</sup> Place	#57	\$67,000	\$335,000
5311 NE 15 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	#46	\$63,000	\$310,000
4835 NE 16 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	#59	\$68,000	\$325,000
5104 NE 18 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	#58	\$100,000	\$300,000

## Part VII. 2015 Recommendations

Before developing a list of Recommendations based on current research, we first carefully considered the list of prioritized recommendations developed by the 1992 Alberta Street crew (Fig. 7.1). From that beginning some of the 1992 Recommendations were eliminated from current consideration and others were updated and incorporated into the current list and then re-prioritized based upon crew discussions and consensus. Additional Recommendations were subsequently considered before developing the final list and order. Whenever possible, direct quotes from our interviewees were incorporated in support of this final listing.

### 1992 Recommendations Revisited

Figure 7.1 is an abbreviated listing of the original 1992 Recommendations (Gardner et al. 1992: 133-139). Three of these recommendations were determined to be not relevant at this time: #1 (Garbage), #5 (Tri-Met improvements), and #8 (Paved Streets).

In 1992 visible litter and garbage were an eyesore in many parts of the study area. The house on the left in Fig. 4.8 is a good example, although not nearly as bad as several other locations at that time. There were a number of accounts of problems with rats as well, and the crew and some of the interviewees assumed they were likely related to the open garbage situation and could pose a public health risk: “Everyone thought that there were health issues involved, as well as general unsightliness” (Gardner et al. 1992: 133). Specific locations mentioned were 26<sup>th</sup> and Wygant, 16<sup>th</sup> and Alberta, and 8<sup>th</sup> and Webster. None of these locations seems to be having garbage or litter problems at this time and, in fact, this did not seem to be a serious problem in any of the areas that were inventoried. Instead of being a top priority the 2015 crew decided that this was no longer a serious problem and removed it from the list.

In 1992 there were very few Tri-Met bus shelters or benches in the study area and the crew observed (Gardner et al. 1992: 136):

Also, on many of the Alberta corners there are stone barrel garbage cans. They were over-flowing with repulsive trash at the time of our inventory. We were told that Tri-Met is supposed to empty the garbage cans, and that they often fail to do so.

**Fig. 7.1. 1992 Alberta Street Project Prioritized Recommendations**



## 2015 ALBERTA STREET PROJECT

### African American Youth Cultural Resource Inventory w/Recommendations

#### 1992 Prioritized Student Project Recommendations

1. **Garbage and Litter Management.** Concerns regarding unsightliness and potential health hazards. Recommendation is that local residents cooperate with the City government to schedule regular garbage pickups and street sweepings.
2. **Neighborhood Improvements.** Concerns with poorly maintained churches, businesses, homes and lawns and with dangerous recreational conditions and abandoned structures. Recommendation is to establish a Neighborhood Watch Program and to alert and cooperate with existing home improvement programs.
3. **African American Businesses.** Concerns regarding small number of African American businesses in the study area. Recommendation is to first encourage active support of existing Black businesses, and also to follow guidelines of OAME Project Alberta to identify and fund new minority owned businesses in the neighborhood.
4. **Safe Recreational Areas.** Concern that only Alberta Park currently affords safe recreational opportunities for local residents. Recommendation is that serious attention be given to development of local recreational sites for children and young adults.
5. **Alberta Street Tri-Met Improvements.** Concern was that Tri-Met had too few bus shelters and benches and did not maintain trash disposal cans in study area. Recommendation was to install more shelters and benches and regularly manage garbage at designated bus stops.
6. **African Center.** Concern that there were no African cultural facilities in the city. Recommendation was for concerned citizens to begin lobbying for such a facility in the form of a museum or cultural center in the Alberta Street neighborhood.
7. **Tree Planting Selections.** Concern was too few trees in the study area, and that several existing exotic trees were subjected to disease and drought. Recommendation was that Peace Trees and other organizations be made aware of this problem and asked to help to resolve it.
8. **Paved Streets.** Concern was that unpaved streets in the neighborhood were unsightly, difficult to maintain, and potentially hazardous to local children. Recommendation was that local residents “have a meeting and see if something can be done.”

At his time there are several good TriMet shelters in place and garbage does not seem to be a problem. Apparently this was a problem noticed by many others as well and has been resolved, so this recommendation was also removed.

In 1992 the crew was also concerned about unpaved roads in the study area, particularly between 24<sup>th</sup> and Wygant and 29<sup>th</sup> and Wygant. These areas are still unpaved and seem to serve more as alleyways at this time. Still, our current crew did not think this was a major concern (possibly because Wygant Street wasn't inventoried this year) and also removed it from the current list, which incorporates the remaining five 1992 Recommendations.

### **1. Support New and Existing Black Businesses**

The N/NE Portland community should openly support and encourage African American businesses through new businesses formations and by supporting existing Black-owned businesses. This was part of Recommendation #3 in 1992 and became a top priority of discussion and concern this summer, largely because of the current research focus on new African American business formations and existing employment opportunities. These discussions were often initiated following comments made by interviewees:

Wayne Cannon:

We have to have support from our own because sometimes, the general patrons, once they find out you are Black would rather go to another establishment and pay a higher price for something that is less quality.

Marnella Bingham:

Finding ways to have more economic impact; that is, seeking economic independence and then recognizing the resistance to subjugation by independently building our capacity and industry business as we did these things with Coast Industries, Courtesy Janitorial, Sevier's business -- and they had to do business in the face of a bit of a headwind, but they did it anyway . . . Resilience is important to let the young people know what business enterprise is; finding ways for young people to identify business opportunities and make such a case to get the funding they need to be more persuasive in the banking community.



Bernadette Scott:

Young people: Be a part of the community, doing what you're doing right now, finding out information, making yourself acquainted with the shops and the businesses and the business people. Come and introduce yourself as you go into shops -- make sure that people know who you are and what you're up to; what your goals are.

Ernest Harris:

Let me say this: I love the thing about businesses. There is a lot of room not only here on Alberta, but throughout the city for increasing businesses. But, supporting the existing businesses is the number one key. If we don't support what we have, we have nothing. A lot of the Black businesses are not being supported. In order to keep Black businesses we have to support the ones that are already there.

## **2. Buy and Retain Black Business and Residential Properties.**

This recommendation is specific to property ownership, no matter who might own, rent, or lease the business or residence. Several interviewees offered unsolicited and serious advice in this regard, and the wisdom of that advice is borne out by the figures in Tables 4.1 and 4.3.

Rukaiyah Adams:

It was suggested that there be more investment and innovative as well as practical ways to not lose as many of our Black business owners . . . make an intentional effort to preserve and to purchase businesses that would be Black-owned and address the wealth disparities that exist between cultures. There is no equitable answer to the gentrification question that does not have a component for equity on ownership -- there is none that is acceptable to me. At the core of this is the disparities between access to cash, access to capital, access to money that would be loaned from institutions . . .

This conversation we're having about wealth and wealth transfer is the evolution of the civil rights movement. We have moved from the moral case for freedom out of slavery to the legal case for equal

treatment under the U.S. Constitution. The next step is the economic equity discussion that we were having about wealth transfer. That is, marking your place in the discussion about civil rights. We're not going to sue people. We're not going to depend on their moral correctness. It's time to sit down and have a conversation about the impact of a gentrification. Your agenda is an ownership agenda. You've got to own it! If you don't own it, you will always be paying rent to the people who do. This is what is at stake in this struggle for Alberta Street.

### **3. Neighborhood Improvements/Safe Recreational Areas**

This recommendation combines 1992 Recommendation #2 (Neighborhood Improvements) and Recommendation #3 (Safe Recreational Areas) because current crewmembers thought that they were basically complementary to one another. At that time (1992) the observation was made: "We think that property values would be much higher if local churches, businesses, homes and lawns were better maintained" (Gardner et al. 1992: 134).

Ben Berry:

Well, on the one hand, it's good to grow and benefit the community, but if you change out the people who originally lived there because they can no longer afford the taxes and are pushed out, that is a downside of gentrification. For its many positive benefits, I think there has to be affordable housing provided so no matter what part of the city that you live in there should be set-asides across the whole city for affordable housing.

Bernadette Scott:

And now you can't find the services that were once up on Alberta Street. They are in the outlying areas. Barbecue and beauty salons and haircuts; but some people were very established and found in the same traffic patterns and we still had some businesses, but the difference is where we had a lot of community centers like Matt Dishman Center in Portland, people who live in the outer area now don't have those same services.

#### **4. Include African Americans in Community Events**

This is a new recommendation, based largely on the perception that new residents in the Alberta Street neighborhood were developing new businesses, celebrations and events that were largely perceived as excluding long-time local Black residents and business owners. Some discussion was made in support of 1992 Recommendation #6 (African Center) as potentially being part of this recommendation, with thoughts of a local center being located in the BUF Building or a similar location, but the main focus was on existing events such as Last Thursday and Alberta Street Fair.

Bernadette Scott:

Let's do a better job of inviting more of the community to feel a part of the Last Thursday. That "disconnect" is the biggest problem; people in the neighborhood not feeling like they are a part of the Last Thursday event.

Terrell Brandon:

I love it to open my doors for Last Thursday and to witness people enjoying themselves on Alberta Street; and the Last Thursday event, despite some of the criticism, connects a lot of the businesses that are on Alberta Street and will have a [positive] common experience on those occasions. On Last Thursdays I open my doors at 4 o'clock and I keep them open until 10 o'clock and I'm like the last one standing . . . Last Thursday I consider a great opportunity . . . Definitely I think that they [police] should continue what we can do to – is if anything that does go a little wrong with all those people there, that they can respond immediately . . .

I think that it's the diversity that really is the contrast with 1992 when it was mostly Black folks, and now Last Thursday is an example of a great deal of diversity on the kinds of people coming to Alberta Street and I can see there even is a lot of international flavor of people coming from different cultures and different communities coming to see Alberta Street. It actually gives me a great sense of pride to be part of the community.

## **5. Landscape Management: Including Planning and Maintenance**

Landscape management and tree planning, planting and maintenance were seen as a general need throughout the study area, as indicated by Map 5.2. Some lawns were unmowed and untended and had weeds and unpruned shrubs and were unsightly. Several conifer trees had grown significantly since 1992 (e.g. Fig. 3.9) and were now posing a threat to nearby homes and businesses. Older trees in many areas had grown up into powerlines and/or were causing unsightly and dangerous cracks in the sidewalks. Even newly planted trees were still being planted under power lines in some locations. Crew consensus was that many older trees should probably be removed, and that younger trees needed to be better maintained. New trees should be planted in many areas, or to replace trees that had grown too old or troublesome, but better planning was needed so far as placement and species selection.

In 1992 it was noted that Killingsworth, Emerson, and Roselawn Streets between 19<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> Avenues could benefit by adding trees “to provide shade on hot, scorching days” (Gardner et al. 1992: 137), but the current inventory did not include these areas, so we are not aware of current conditions as this is being written. In 1992 there was also concern that native vegetation be encouraged for both ecological and economic reasons as Portland was experiencing a water shortage at that time and many non-native species were either suffering, dying, or requiring much costly maintenance (ibid.: 137):

We particularly recommend that native varieties be used rather than exotic species because they require less water, chemicals, and care. Native trees also provide homes and food for wildlife, such as squirrels. The trees also provide food for the animals.

During our tour of NIKE headquarters we learned that it cost \$100,000 an acre to landscape with exotic vegetation, and \$10,000 an acre per year to maintain the plants. Island Landscaping, a minority business, was landscaping another area of NIKE with native vegetation for a lot less money. We were told that maintenance costs would be very little. We also saw exotic trees drying up and losing their leaves because of the current ban on water use during our inventory.



Wayne Cannon:

I'm a big fan of [neighborhood] beautification and as I go in other areas in the region in other parts of town they are manicuring trees and shrubs and that, but in our area that's not the case. So, I'm in favor of beautification as a priority, and that bushes and trees are part of that; not one particular type of shrubs that I prefer, but a variety.

### **General: Replicate Alberta Street Project in Other Places**

The 1992 Alberta Street Report demonstrated the value in establishing baseline data in order to better measure change through time, as demonstrated by this report. In retrospect it could have been better integrated into local planning processes and into local school curricula. One can speculate regarding its usefulness if civic leaders had paid more attention to the recommendations of its student researchers. Would the negative aspects of gentrification have been as severe for local African American families during the past 20 years if we had only listened to the ideas and opinions of local business leaders, home owners, and young people at that time?

A long-term purpose of studies such as this is to better identify and evaluate the cultural resources we have in order to use them to help build a better future. In the short-term, these projects provide an excellent opportunity for minority youth to gain and enhance useful academic and job skills via meaningful employment.

Key improvements can be made to these efforts by employing larger crews (8-10 people), working more time (8-10 weeks), and with better-equipped computer labs (current software).

Sam Brooks:

Work with older people to tell their stories is history that is held in their minds. Go to the expense of [interviewing] our senior citizens, getting them to tell their stories -- and to make sure that their stories are heard by young folks. It is important for young people to know that they are standing on the shoulders of the people who came before.

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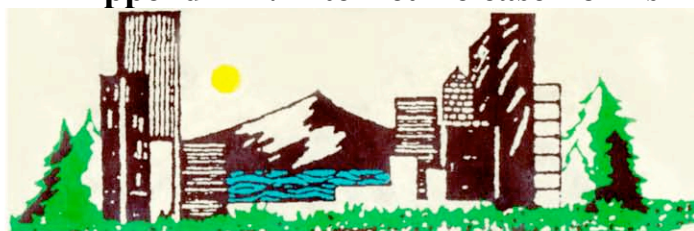
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## Appendix A. Internet Release Forms



# 2015 ALBERTA STREET PROJECT

African American Youth Cultural Resource Inventory w/Recommendations

### AGREEMENT TO USE IMAGE AND NAME ON INTERNET FOR 2015 ALBERTA STREET PROJECT

I, \_\_\_\_\_, understand that, as a participant in the 2015 Alberta Street Project, that my name and image will appear on project Internet products and communications, including email, the Alberta Street project website, and the Alberta Street Facebook page.

By signing this agreement I agree to allow the use of my name and image by Oregon Websites and Watersheds, Inc., World Arts Foundation, Inc., and 2015 Alberta Street for educational and research purposes.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

For Oregon Websites & Watersheds Project, Inc:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_

For World Arts Foundation, Inc.:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_



Oregon Websites & Watersheds Project, Inc.  
Philomath, Oregon



World Arts Foundation, Inc.  
Portland, Oregon

## **Appendix B. Interview Questions**

### **Questions to be asked once Internet Release form is signed.**

#### **1. Background information**

- a) When and where were you born?
- b) When and why did your family move to Oregon?
- c) What are your memories of Alberta Street in 1992?

#### **2. Important People**

- a) Who in the Alberta neighborhood is important/special to you?
- b) Where do (did) they live and why are they important to you?

#### **3. Important Buildings & Structures**

- a) What are your favorite buildings in the Alberta Street study area?
- b) What can we do to make each building better?

#### **4. Important Places**

- a) What are your favorite places in the Alberta Street area?
- b) What can we do to make it/them better?

#### **5. Significant Events & Activities**

- a) What kind of activities do you enjoy doing in the Alberta Street area?
- b) What events have been important in the Alberta Street neighborhood?

#### **6. Vegetation & Wildlife**

- a) What trees and bushes do you enjoy and/or use in the Alberta?
- b) What wildlife do you see -- good or bad -- in the Alberta street area?

#### **7. Personal Opinions**

- a) What are your thoughts and personal opinions on Gentrification?
- b) How has crime changed in the neighborhood?
- c) What can older people do to improve the community?
- d) What can younger people do to improve the community?

#### **8. Last Thursdays**

- a) Have you attended a Last Thursday event?
- b) What are your thoughts and opinions about Last Thursdays?
- c) If you think Last Thursdays should continue, what can be done to make the event better?

## Appendix C. Alberta Street \$10 Restaurant Reviews

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### Bella Faccia Pizzeria \$10 Restaurant Review

Updated about 3 months ago · Taken at 2934 NE Alberta Street, Portland, Oregon

Review by Joshua Davis.

These photos were taken at Bella Faccia Pizzeria on July 9th 2015 at 2934 Alberta Street. This was the site of the first 2015 Alberta Street Project "\$10 Restaurant Review."

This is a series of reviews where each member of the crew is given \$8.50 for food purchase and \$1.50 for tips to review meals of various restaurants in the study area. Restaurants are evaluated on seven different categories on a basis of 1 to 5 points each, with 5 being the best, 3 is acceptable, and 1 being the worst. These numbers are then averaged via a weighted scale in order to arrive at a final score.

The final score is further based on a weighted average derived by multiplying Food Quality by 5; Value by 4; Service by 3; Cleanliness by 2; Atmosphere, Decor, and Restrooms by 1 each and then dividing the total by the 17 weights. An absolute minimum score for a restaurant with all seven categories under consideration would therefore be 17, and an absolute maximum score would be 85.

Cleanliness: 4 (x 2 = 8/10). Place was very clean for a typical pizzeria, just not hospital sterile.

Atmosphere: 5 (x1 = 5/5). We really enjoyed our time there.

Decor: 4 (x1 = 4/5). Decoration was pleasant and functional, just not exceptional or particularly warm..

Restrooms: 3 (x1 = 3/5). Restroom was reportedly clean and functional, but was apparently being remodeled at the time.

Service: 5 (x3 = 15/15). Our waiter/cook was friendly, helpful, quick, and courteous.

Food Quality: 5 (x5 = 25/25). Perfect crust, excelent toppings, cooked to perfection.

Value: 4 (x4 = 16/20). Within our budget, but somewhat spendy.

Weighted Score: 4.5 (76/85 = 89.4%). Highly recommended.



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Bella Faccia Pizzeria \$10 Restaurant Review

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Cleanliness: 4 (x 2 = 8/10). Place was very clean for a recommended.

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4 Shares

2015 Alberta Street Project, Fred Azarewicz, Jona Hewitt Davis and 2 others like this. Top Comments

Write a comment...

**Amy LaRosa-peters** Thanks! I haven't been there but I will now, looks yummy. Can't wait to see more \$10 restaurant reviews  
 Unlike · Reply · Message · 1 · July 22 at 10:22am

**2015 Alberta Street Project** Thanks, Amy! Next up: Cannon's Rib Express, catered to Alberta Park. It's looking like another solid score.  
 Like · Reply · Commented on by Bob Zybach (?) · July 22 at 11:38pm

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## Cannon's Rib Express \$10 Restaurant Review

Updated about a month ago · Taken at [Grant High School \(Portland, Oregon\)](#)

Review by Bode Arigbon.

This review is for people who like barbecued pork ribs.

These photos were taken at Grant High School Room 101 on July 28th, 2015. This was our second enjoyable serving of Cannon's catered ribs, following our initial review at Alberta Park on July 16th, 2015. This is also the second 2015 Alberta Street Project "\$10 Restaurant Review."

The Alberta Street project \$10 Restaurant Review is a series of reviews where each member of the crew is given \$8.50 for food purchase and \$1.50 for tips to review meals of various restaurants in the study area. Restaurants are evaluated on seven different categories -- Food Quality; Value; Service; Cleanliness; Atmosphere; Decor and Restrooms -- on a basis of 1 to 5 points each, with 5 being the best, 3 is acceptable, and 1 being the worst. These numbers are then averaged via a weighted scale in order to arrive at a final score.

The final score is derived by multiplying the Food Quality number by 5; Value by 4; Service by 3; Cleanliness by 2; Atmosphere, Decor, and Restrooms by 1 each, and then dividing the total by the 17 total weights. An absolute minimum score for a restaurant with all seven categories under consideration would therefore be 17 ( $17 \times 1$ ); and an absolute maximum score would be 85 ( $17 \times 5$ ).

We did not consider Cleanliness, Atmosphere, Décor and Restrooms in regards to this Review because Cannon's actual place of business is just outside the study area and because we had our food delivered to Alberta Park instead -- and catered barbecued ribs is also the focus of Cannon's business.

Service:  $5 (x3 = 15/15)$ . The delivery was on time, our food was still hot and neatly organized and everything was neat and clean.

Food Quality:  $5 (x5 = 25/25)$ . The ribs that we ate were tender, meaty and had a great smoky flavor. The barbeque sauce was also really good -- our only complaint would be the spicy barbeque sauce could have been a bit spicier according to one or two team members.

Value:  $4 (x4 = 16/20)$ . We didn't give it a perfect score because the food price had a good value to it but not a great value. The prices could have a little bit lower but we very highly recommend Cannon's Ribs Express (if you like BBQ pork ribs).

Weighted Score:  $4.7 (56/12 = 4.7; 56/60 = 93.3\%)$ . Again, we highly recommend Cannon's Rib Express. They are the best ribs in town.

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Cannon's Rib Express \$10 Restaurant Review

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👍 Aaron L Zybach and Will Bennett like this.

Write a comment...



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## Jack's Chicken (Alberta Street Market) \$10 Restaurant Review

Updated about 2 months ago · Taken at Martin Luther King Jr School

Review by Dominic Williams

This review is for people who like fried chicken.

These photos were taken on July 27th 2015, at the playground behind Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School while eating Jack's Chicken from the Alberta Street Market. This was the site of the 3rd 2015 Alberta Street Project "\$10 Restaurant Review."

The 2015 Alberta Street "\$10 Restaurant Reviews" are a series of local reviews where each member of the crew is given \$8.50 for food purchase and \$1.50 for tips to evaluate meals at various restaurants in the study area. Restaurants are evaluated on seven different categories on a basis of 1 to 5 points each, with 5 being the best, 3 is acceptable, and 1 being the worst. These numbers are then averaged via a weighted scale in order to arrive at a final score.

A final score is derived by multiplying each of the seven by a weight -- Food Quality by 5; Value by 4; Service by 3; Cleanliness by 2; Atmosphere, Decor, and Restrooms by 1 each -- and then dividing the point total by the 17 total weights. An absolute minimum score for a restaurant with all seven categories under consideration would therefore be 17 (17 x 1); and an absolute maximum score would be 85 (17 x 5).

Cleanliness: 3 (3 x 2 = 6/10). "Jack's chicken" is typically sold in five dollar amounts at Alberta Street Market. It is locally famous for the size, quality and quantity of "Jack's" fried chicken wings and jojo's -- and for being "\$5." The store is typically clean for a market of its size and products.

Atmosphere: 4 (4 x 1 = 4/5). Chill and comfortable, but a little crowded, for a market famous for its chicken.

Decor: 4 (4 x 1 = 4/5). Alberta Market has a typical small market decor, but with a local personality.

Restrooms: 4 (4 x 1 = 4/5). Were very clean, according to our single review sampling.

Service: 4 (4 x 3 = 12/15). Did not have to wait long for your food, but had to stand in aisles in the way of shoppers while it was being prepared.

Food Quality: 5 (5 x 5 = 25/25). The chicken was cooked to perfection -- a combination of crispy and juicy: crispy mouthwatering coating with juicy meat on the inside with a nice side of jojos. Even from the smell you are hooked.

Value: 5 (5 x 4 = 20/20). This was well within our budget. You get six very large and very tender chicken wings and a side of jojos for only \$5 and no place to leave a tip. Lots to spend on drinks, and a number of us had leftovers for later.

Weighted Score: 4.4 (75/17; 75/85 = 88.3). Highly recommended for Portland fried chicken lovers. Go there sooner rather than later.



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Jack's Chicken (Alberta Street Market) \$10 Restaurant Review

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Will Bennett and Pamela Northey like this. Top Comments

Write a comment...

**Will Bennett => Jack's Chicken**  
[www.eatatjacks.com](http://www.eatatjacks.com)

**#eatatjacks**  
 Jack's is a local restaurant chain with 130+ locations in the southeast. For 50+ years we have specialized in Hamburgers, Fries & Hand-Dipped Blue Bell Shakes.  
[EATATJACKS.COM](http://EATATJACKS.COM)

Like · Reply · Message · Remove Preview · August 9 at 8:29pm

**2015 Alberta Street Project** That's an entirely different Jack's, Will. I think the crew has spoken: if you want some of the finest fried chicken wings in Oregon, go to the Alberta Street Market in NE Portland and get a five-dollar bag of Jack's Chicken and jojos. You were there, Will --what are your thoughts?

Like · Reply · Commented on by Bob Zybach (?) · August 10 at 10:05pm

## Appendix D. Alberta Street Project News Accounts



QR code for  
Portland Observer  
Online

**The**





**Juneteenth Freedom**  
Photo essay  
from Portland's  
annual event  
See page 8



**Multicultural Showcase**  
Good in the  
Hood celebrates  
neighborhoods  
See Local News, page 3

# The Portland Observer

'City of Roses' 
Volume XLIV  
Number 25



[www.portlandobserver.com](http://www.portlandobserver.com)  
 Wednesday • June 25, 2014

Established in 1970  
 Committed to Cultural Diversity

## 44

years of  
community service



BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER  
Bob Zyback (left) and Mike Grice (right), two longtime Portland educators looking to resurrect a student-led study on the heavily gentrified neighborhoods around Northeast Alberta Street, visit with Nate Hartley of Harley Oil Co., one of the few black business owners who still operate on the thoroughfare synonymous with gentrification.

## Revisiting Alberta

*Proposed new look  
at issues comes  
with racial lens*

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

**G**ood, bad, ugly, and beautiful, black people were very much present on and around Northeast Alberta Street

in 1992. Even if the surrounding neighborhoods were some of the most economically depressed in the city, there were opportunities and resources, some hidden in plain sight.

Fast forward to 2014, and two Portland educators Mike Grice and Bob Zyback, are looking to resurrect a student-led study that examined the now heavily gentrified areas around Alberta Street, but with some new considerations for the new millennium.

During the year of the original study, several inner north and northeast Portland neighborhoods were majority black

*continued* ▼ on page 4



# Revisiting Alberta

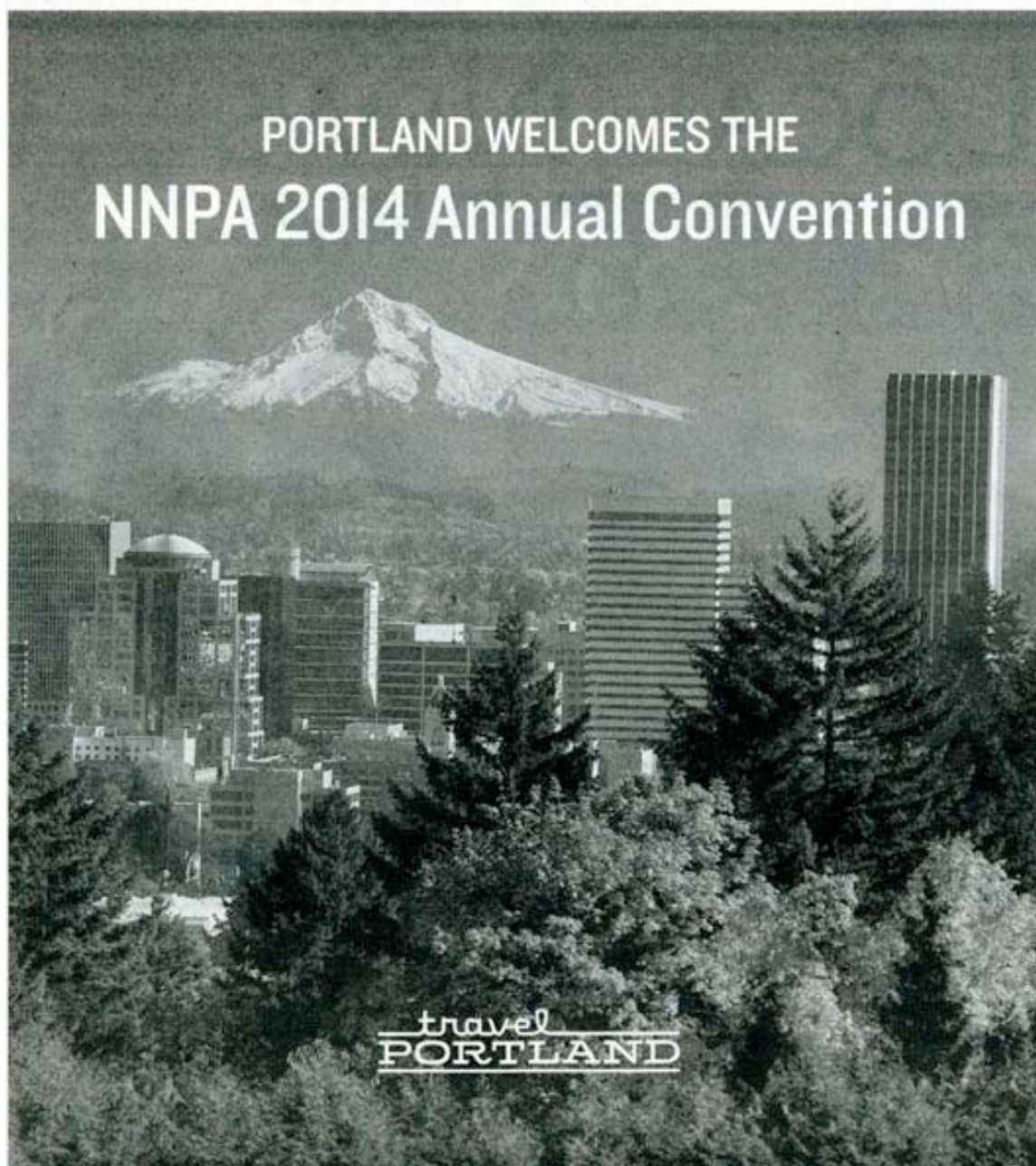
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occupied, particularly of note since African Americans were and remain an overwhelming minority

in the city, totaling about 8 percent of the population even today.

At the time northeast Portland was home to about two thirds of Portland's abandoned houses.

## PORTLAND WELCOMES THE NNPA 2014 Annual Convention



June 25, 2014

Boarded up properties, vacant lots, litter, garbage, and wildflowers were some of the common realities on this side of town.

"There really wasn't much here," said Nate Hartley, an African American business owner who set up his petroleum and oil company on Alberta Street back in 1991. He says the area was severely blighted at the time. "For blocks, it was way different, there were no businesses," the 74-year-old said.

With more than two successful decades under his belt at his current location, Hartley says the economic upshift in the area that has been good for business but he wishes the upturn did not leave so many other black people behind. Hartley is one of the few remaining black business owners on Alberta today.

High-end grocers, healthy eateries, galleries, and coffee shops now sit in place of the blemishes that not long ago were commonplace in the centrally located neighborhood. Many of the black families that called the area home now live on the outskirts of the city. Census figures show that in the few neighborhoods that were majority black, whites have quickly become the majority.

Amongst this reality, Grice and Zybach want to recreate a project that can hire young, minority residents to study the current issues facing Alberta. This time, the pair says the students can tackle issues more pertinent to the time, like gentrification, gang violence, and the monthly arts walk "Last Thursday" which has infused the thoroughfare with festivities starting in 1997, but also spills crowds, noise and parked vehicles into adjoining residential properties. The area is now popularly referred to as the "Alberta Arts District."

Using newspaper articles, books, black and white photographs, hand drawn diagrams and other tools at their disposal, the original study's 150-page report concluded Portland's black population was being neglected and systematically left for poor but was sitting on a wealth of re-

sources.

Grice, a lifelong mentor to young black males in Portland, said a revival of the Alberta Street study would present a huge opportunity for not only for students but the city as well.

The proposed "Alberta Street 2014 Project, Cultural Resource Inventory with Recommendations" project would employ up to 20 high school pupils from the minority community for 8 weeks. Duplicating the exact same boundaries as the '92 report, the students would use updated maps, models and pictures, and conduct their own interviews of current residents and business owners. The end result would be a presentation of recommendations to the Portland City Council based upon their hands-on research.

Ultimately, Grice would like the new study to serve as a national model on how not only to push back against gentrification, but build community wealth in neglected areas. They would look at how the economy of the area changed, examine what led to the displacement of former residents, and talk with current occupants of the neighborhood's homes and businesses.

Current collaborators for the project's renewal include Oregon Websites and Watershed Project, Inc.; World Arts Foundation, Inc.; Cascade Pacific Council, Boy Scouts of America, and the Portland Development Commission.

Grice and Zybach have been attempting to regain contact with the original six students that brought the first project to fruition. To date they've been successful locating Monica Owens who was not only elated to hear from her two former project leaders, but informed them that listing the project on her resume in her early days got her into jobs she wouldn't have been considered for otherwise.

For more information on the new initiative or how to get involved, email Zybach at [ZybachB@ORWW.org](mailto:ZybachB@ORWW.org) or Grice at [meg@nothingbutquality.com](mailto:meg@nothingbutquality.com).





CONCORDIA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
PO BOX 11194 / PORTLAND, OR 97211

# CONCORDIA NEWS

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March 2015

## Alberta St. Project Revisited 23 Years Later

By Luke Griffin

Back in 1992, Alberta Street was a different place. Very few of the current businesses had opened, there was no gold rush of land development, and the city had yet to spend money on beautifying the neighborhood, making it more pedestrian friendly, or providing assistance to small businesses. Alberta Street neighborhoods also had over 50% more African-Americans than they do today.

That spring and summer, young people in the community engaged in an ambitious study of their neighborhood, surveying businesses, researching the long history of Alberta, talking with neighbors and compiling an impressive amount of useful data about the place they called "home." Led by Dr. Bob Zybach and Michael "Chappie" Grice of Urban Forestry, Inc., students ultimately created the "1992 Alberta Street Cultural Inventory with Recommendations". Now, 23 years later, the Zybach and Grice are aiming to do it again.

Like before, the 2015 Alberta Street Project will employ African-American youth from the area full time to conduct the various forms of data collection. They will use GPS, computers, and iPhones and will have the 1992 study as a constant reference to guide their work all while learning technical and communication skills and networking with local business and community leaders.

Besides providing skilled summer jobs, the project aims to address issues of gentrification, gang violence, and examine social events, particularly Last Thursday. It will also explore causes and possible remedies for failing businesses and attempt to make a inventory of the trees and plants that make up the urban canopy. Other areas of focus will be drainage patterns, traffic flow, crime statistics, and even restaurant reviews. The teams will attempt to contact all local businesses and many residents including those recent to the area and those who have been around since before the initial study.

The proposed start date for the project is in late June and will last nine weeks throughout the summer. As before, Zybach and Grice will lead the teams. The project itself specifically targets the Alberta District including Concordia as well as Sabin but the hope is that this project can be used as a model for other students in neighborhoods around the country. Unlike future projects though, this one will have the benefit of preexisting, comparable data.

### Alberta St. Project

Continued on Page 2

transportation passes and basic job training for the 16 students and 4 young adult supervisors: a total of 180 hours each, at a cost of approximately \$50,000. An additional \$20,000 has also been secured from the Portland Development Commission (PDC) for production of the final project report.

This summer, look for the youth teams taking to Alberta. Please respond to their questions and assist them as best you can. They are helping to paint a detailed picture of the Alberta Street community so that issues facing the community can be addressed in an informed manner. And look for the final products to be published this fall.

Interested in helping? Contact Bob Zybach, ORWW (541-767-3087 / ZybachB@ORWW.org)

Michael "Chappie" Grice, World Arts PDX (415-722-4348 / mchappie@yahoo.com)



(left to right): Michael "Chappie" Grice, Wayne Giesy, Deborah Gardner Moore, Bob Zybach

## General Membership Meeting

Please come join us and discuss neighborhood activities and issues.

April 7th @ 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM  
McMenamin's Kennedy School Community Room

In the end, there will be three products to assist the neighborhoods and the city in understanding where Alberta started, how it has changed and is changing over time, and how to proceed in the future to create a livable Alberta Street:

- 1) The "2015 Alberta Street Cultural Resource Inventory with Recommendations": The centerpiece of the project will be researched and written by students and will replicate the original 1992 report, but to current technical standards. It will also include an entirely new component of a detailed comparative analysis in changes to the Alberta Street neighborhood during the past 23 years.
- 2) The "Alberta Street Project Operations Manual": The manual will be written during the course of the project by its original designers and administrators, Zybach and Grice.
- 3) The Website: This will include PDF files of the two written reports as well as a permanent and comprehensive archive of student findings and results, including: maps, photographs, transcribed interviews and other products of their summer employment experiences that can be accessed by the general public.

The project is still in its planning stages and although some funding is secured but financial assistance is still greatly needed. If you are interested, you can play a favored role in securing tax-deductible partnerships and by sponsoring students. The City's federally-funded SummerWorks program has committed to the cost of wages,

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## THE FORESTRY SOURCE EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

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The mission of the Society of American Foresters is to advance the science, education, technology, and practice of forestry; to enhance the competency of its members; to establish standards of professional excellence; and to use the knowledge, skills, and conservation ethic of the profession to ensure the continued health and use of forest ecosystems and the present and future availability of forest resources to benefit society.

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## Taking Forestry to the Streets

By Steve Wilent

I am pleased to have received so many positive comments about my June editorial, "What We Can Do: Ask Minorities to Join Us." Pleased and encouraged that increasing SAF's diversity is seen as a worthy goal—not merely for diversity's sake, but as a path toward a stronger SAF and toward helping all of our nation's people better understand and appreciate forests, foresters, and forest management. SAF member Jeff Romm offers some valuable insights on this subject—see his Letter to the Editor on page 11 in this edition.

Recently, I had an opportunity to meet with a group of young people from urban Portland, Oregon: black high-school students taking part in the Alberta Street Project. The project was initiated in 1992 and involved six black high-school students who documented the Alberta Street neighborhood's "most valuable assets"—its history, architecture, and demographics (for a summary, see [tinyurl.com/o9uehg3](http://tinyurl.com/o9uehg3)). This summer, another group of high-school students replicated the original project in the same area.

The project's goal was, and still is, to "create valuable educational employment opportunities for 16 local predominantly African American high school youth, who will gain market-ready job skills, communication, academic and leadership skills, and develop networks of local community business leaders, experts and other valuable resources during the course of this project." The original 1992 report, with identical methodology, will be used as the guideline to provide a sound scientific basis for comparative analysis of changes during the past 23-year evolution of the Alberta Street community. The 2015 report will also specifically identify and document current conditions and desired future conditions for the neighborhood. Substantive changes during those years include significant demographic shifts, neighborhood gentrification, neighborhood safety, and new opportunities for local business creation.

Bob Zybach was a key leader in setting up both the 1992 project and this summer's revisiting of the neighborhood. Zybach earned bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in forestry and environmental sciences from Oregon State University. Since 1996, he has been program manager for the Oregon Websites & Watersheds Project Inc. (ORWW, [www.orww.org](http://www.orww.org)), which is dedicated to "[showing] students how to use Internet communications and scientific methodology to help manage Oregon's natural and cultural resources."

Zybach invited me to meet with the Alberta Street Project participants at a Portland city park to talk about forests, forestry, the importance of urban trees, and natural-resources management in general. He also asked me to demonstrate the collection of basic forestry data, such as DBH, height, species identification, and volume calculation. The students—only three of the 16 students participating in the project



Alberta Street Project participants (left to right): Josh Davis (with clinometer) and Bode Arighon, project organizer and manager Bob Zybach, and project supervisor Deborah Moore.

able were able to attend that day—used a logger's tape and clinometer to make the measurements of trees in a city park. Later, the students used this knowledge in conducting an inventory of trees in the Alberta Street neighborhood. We also visited the nearby Ainsworth Linear Arboretum, which is unique among US arboretums, according to Friends of Trees (see [tinyurl.com/oa4phtp](http://tinyurl.com/oa4phtp)). The arboretum stretches for about 30 blocks on Ainsworth Street and features more than 60 different species, both approved street trees and others being evaluated for their performance and suitability as street trees.


During our lunch break, Wayne Giesy, cofounder of ORWW, was a guest speaker. In April 2013, Giesy was named an honorary member of the Oregon SAF for lifetime achievement in forestry in Oregon. Later that year at the national convention in Charleston, South Carolina, he was made an honorary member of the national SAF for his lifetime of outstanding contributions to forestry in the United States. Though Giesy is not a forester, he has extensive experience in the timber industry as a logger and lumber-company salesman. He also served in the Oregon State legislature. (See [tinyurl.com/ox3tab4](http://tinyurl.com/ox3tab4) for more about his background.) During and after lunch, Giesy, a spry 95-year-old, talked about a wide range of topics, such as the life in Oregon in the 1930s and 1940s, the timber industry, the importance of forests to the region, and the role of blacks as loggers in Oregon (see, for example, the Maxville Visitor Center, [www.maxvilleheritage.org](http://www.maxvilleheritage.org)).

I'll leave further discussion of the Alberta Street Project to Zybach, who has promised to write about it in a future edition of *The Forestry Source*. See also [www.facebook.com/AlbertaStreetProject](http://www.facebook.com/AlbertaStreetProject).

Although I played a very small role in

the project, it gave me a chance to practice what I preached in the June editorial. I told the young men about SAF and forestry and about the forestry and natural-resources degree programs at Mt. Hood Community College, where I teach part-time, and at Oregon State University. I told them about career opportunities in these fields and that many foresters relish having jobs that involve work out of doors. I invited them to contact me to talk about forestry or forestry education. I assured them that SAF would welcome them if they chose careers in forestry. And I was delighted that they all expressed interest in their city's trees. One said he hadn't previously thought much about trees, but he now sees them as "pretty interesting." I hope that their newfound appreciation spreads like rings on a pond from these young men to their coworkers, family, and friends.

For what it's worth, SAF would be fortunate to count these fine young men as members. We need them and others like them, and our task is to explain to them why they might want to join us.

One vehicle for doing so is SAF's Student Diversity Ambassador Program, a year-long program designed to promote leadership skills and create a community for those students involved. Diversity Ambassadors attend the SAF National Convention and take part in activities focused on leadership and networking skills, and they have opportunities to interact with SAF leaders, the chief of the Forest Service, and many other forestry professionals. You'll find information and an application form at [tinyurl.com/prw78eo](http://tinyurl.com/prw78eo). For more information, contact Rachel Reyna at [rreyna@pa.gov](mailto:rreyna@pa.gov). 

Have you had an opportunity to reach out to minorities? I'd like to hear about it. Contact me at 503-622-3033 or [wilents@safnet.org](mailto:wilents@safnet.org).



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