rose from 143 in 1880 to 3000 in 1888 to nearly 6000 in 1891. Ease of transportation to Portland’s downtown enabled this population growth. Unlike today, means of public conveyance were private enterprises primarily interested in making money. Cheap five cent fairs were not an efficient way of making money, but real estate was. Most streetcar companies were closely tied to land developers who desired a customer base to whom they could sell inexpensively acquired land. In an era before widespread automobile use people generally had to live close to city centers but with the recent invention of the electric streetcar commutes that would have been slow by foot or horse drawn streetcar became quick and efficient. Ironically, the streetcar systems that are often seen today as icons of a bygone civic minded era were actually a means to the end of making money off land speculation. Alberta St. grew as a commercial center primarily because of the streetcar line that ran along it between Union Ave. (now Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd) and 30th.

By 1900 Albina had taken its shape with three main areas, riverside industrial land, the central commercial area along streetcar lines, and surrounding residential areas.