

EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP (EAG) MEETING #28

Date and Time: Monday, August 21, 2023, 5:30pm to 7:30pm

Location: Zoom Webinar and YouTube Livestream

Number of concurrent YouTube viewers: 10

WELCOME

Dr. Roberta Hunte, EAG Facilitator, welcomed EAG members to the meeting, explained how to view closed captions, gave instructions for public input, and previewed the meeting agenda.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

Greg Johnson, Program Administrator, shared several updates on the program:

- Bi-State Legislative Committee: First meeting in 7 months very robust conversation centering around updates on the program. Will meet with them around late September early October. The next presentation will be regarding the grant applications.
- Recent Presentations:
 - Oregon Transportation Committee & Washington State Transportation Committee: The potential rates associated with tolling were discussed.
 - We continue to meet with the community in efforts to keep everyone informed and below are some of the recent communities to receive presentations:
 - NW Industrial Business Association:
 - CREDC Downtown Stakeholders
 - Washington County Transportation Task Force:
 - Vancouver Transportation & Mobility Commission
 - Lower Columbia River Harbor Safety Committee
 - Institute of Transportation Engineers Annual Meeting
 - Oregon Trucking Association Annual Convention
 - Neighborhood Association Meetings
 - Tours (media, elected officials, Washington State Transit Association)
 - Tabling at community summer events
- Office Hours: Gives the community an opportunity to sit down with program staff to ask more detailed questions. You can sign up on the webpage.
- CBO Mini Grant Applications are open until September 10, 2023.
- Upcoming:
 - Editorials in the Oregonian
 - Release of the Draft SEIS late this year or early next year
 - Public comment period 60 days all comment will get a response

- Looking to start construction 2025. The bridge construction will not start until early 2026. There will be numerous early work contracts in 2025.
- Community Benefit Advisory Group will look at the impact of a mega project on the community and how to mitigate those impacts.

Discussion

EAG member: "What is the range of the CBO grants and what is the time period?"

- Response: The grants will be open until September 10. The range that folks can apply for is pretty wide because we are doing tiered grants like last time. It's \$2,000 dollars, \$5,000 dollars, \$10,000 dollars. You will all be receiving an email with messaging around the details along with links that you can share with other groups and organizations that you know. Your business has to be 501C3 or be fiscally sponsored by one to receive these grants. The third round will be after the public comment period of the draft SEIS. The application is a page long which includes:
 - Who are the communities in which they serve
 - How they get information to those community members
 - Basic information to help us understand their organization better

We have packaged this to be as customizable as possible so that the organizations can focus on outreach, while we focus on the logistics and staffing. This is helpful to organizations of any size. Mini-grants were very successful in the last round and totaled in over 400 engagements, all of which were folks who were newly engaged with the program.

- Response: EAG has helped the program really stand an equity framework, and this effort demonstrates the "process" side of our equity definition. In working with culturally specific community-based organizations as well as community-based organizations who are connected to our equity priority communities to ensure there's a two-way opportunity of both receiving and disseminating information.

Infrastructure Grant Letters of Support (Closing the Loop)

Jake Warr, Equity Lead, shared updates on grant the support letters. The letter was provided with the grant application that was submitted today. The mega grant is a federal grant that is \$600 million dollars that we have applied for. So, thank you all for the edits and support! The questions on that application asked, "How is your project centering equity?"

Administrator Johnson added that the internal equity team, led by Espousal Strategies, did an excellent job of providing a write-up on the activities we are doing to meet the expectations on this mega project.

Program Design: Bridge + Washington Side

Casey Liles and Shilpa Mallem, IBR Design Team, shared several updates on the program design with the focus on the Washington side. Shilpa did a recap of the modified LPA and design options. What we heard in the last meeting:

- Appreciate responsiveness to previous feedback by taking a step back and explaining how the Equity Framework is applying to the work being done around design.
- We feel this approach to explaining the work reflects meeting us where we are at.
 - We would like to see more of this approach as we continue discussing design and other program work.

The area demographics from 2017-2021 from the American Community Survey showed the demographics based on race, age, income, disability, housing, transportation to work, and vehicles available to show comparison to Portland-Vancouver metro area when it comes to the IBR program focus area. Casey showed snapshots of different views in Vancouver that will be going through improvements that help with connecting community. The aerial roll-map was displayed by Casey, and he gave instructions how to get to the area roll map. Casey went through the different bridge configurations and the changes that can come with each (46:00). We are studying what impacts and what needs to be replaced or not.

Discussion

EAG member: “If we could talk about the SR-500 interchange and the lack of access to Fourth Plain or the International District of Vancouver - will there be any improvements to the 39th street and potentially St. Johns exit to compensate for the lack of access to Fourth Plain from SR-500 in the program area?”

- Response: That is something that has been previously looked at and will be in the Draft SEIS.

EAG member: “I’m really challenged with the idea of having less accessibility from eastbound traffic to Fourth Plain - I think that’s cutting off the lower-income areas for a huge flow of east county folk who are coming to I-5 to do their driving, and having Fourth Plain be that much harder to get to - which a majority of the low-income population of the city is.”

EAG member: “I was going to say the exact same thing - that is really challenging for me as well for the things you have mentioned, like the VA hospital, and it has been a lot of development to improve that area on Fourth Plain, and transit station, and widening the streets. For it to be more difficult to access will be a challenge and the community will probably be vocal about it.”

- Response: There is the option to get westbound to SR-500 and taking St. Johns down to Fourth Plain where you can enter the VA, Fourth Plain area, and even Rose Village.

EAG member: “I’m thinking about that interchange, and that goes through a neighborhood, it doesn’t even go through a huge arterial street. It is just houses on a one, maybe even a two-lane street, but it’s residential. So, thinking of all the SR-500 traffic going on that residential street connecting with Fourth Plain. Unless there are some major improvements to that intersection, even good sidewalks in that area.”

Administrator Johneson asked, “So is the reason that you will no longer have that access because of the braided ramp?”

- Response: “The direct access from 500 to Fourth Plain that is the reason.”

EAG member: “I think this presentation would be more digestible if there were landmarks.”

- Response: That’s something we will take back and make sure we get some landmarks on the area map.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment

MEETING EVALUATION POLL

 Polls - □ ×

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EAG Survey

 0:38 | 1 question | 13 of 24 (54%) participated

1. How would you rate tonight's meeting, on a scale of 1-5 (Single Choice) *

13/13 (100%) answered



End Poll

ADJOURN

- Next EAG meeting: September 18, 2023, 5:30pm-7:30pm
- Following EAG meeting: October 16, 2023, 5:30pm-7:30pm

ATTENDEES

Attendees	Organization/Affiliation
EAG Members	
John Gardner	TriMet

Attendees	Organization/Affiliation
Barbara Alexander	Port of Portland
Darcy Hoffman	Workforce Southwest Washington
Hai That Ho Ton	At-large community member
Jennifer Campos	RTC SW Washington
Leann Caver	CTRAN
Meg Johnson	At-large community member
Nicole Chen	City of Vancouver
Sebrina Owens-Wilson	Metro
Shane Valle	Portland Bureau of Transportation
Shona Carter	At-large community member
Sokho Eath	IRCO
Tanya Adams	WSP
Vicki Nakahima	At-large community member
IBR Staff	
Greg Johnson	Program Administrator
Jake Warr	Equity Lead
Dr. Roberta Hunte	Facilitator
Johnell Bell	Principal Equity Officer
Emilee Thomas Peralta	Equity Team
Shilpa Mallem	Urban Design Team
Brent Hamlin	Tech support

Attendees	Organization/Affiliation
Casey Liles	Urban Design Team
Jim Ruddell	Program Manager
Salome Chimuku	Community Engagement
Robert Turton	IBR Major Structures Lead

MEETING RECORDING AND MATERIALS

Meeting Recording

A recording of the meeting is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUO-RBLpdgQ>

Meeting Materials

The meeting materials are available here: <https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/eag-august-21-2023-meeting/>