

JOINT COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP (CAG) AND EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP (EAG) MEETING

Date and Time: Monday, July 21, 2025, 4:00pm to 6:00pm

Location: Zoom Meeting and YouTube Livestream

Number of concurrent YouTube viewers: 35

MEETING OVERVIEW

- **Architectural Elements Overview:** The Program is currently in the conceptual/preliminary design phase of architectural guideline development. Advisory group members were introduced to key principles, goals, and characteristics that will determine how the bridge is viewed and how it is experienced by users.
- **Architectural Characteristics:** A presentation and discussion explored how the current bridge is viewed and experienced by users, residents, and visitors, as well as what features would instill pride and joy in the future bridge.
- **Upcoming Architectural Elements Workshop:** The next advisory group workshop will focus on land-based structures (shared use path, light rail structures and highway land structures), landscaping (urban landscape, design character, viewpoints, under structure considerations, etc.), and wall treatments (sound walls and retaining walls).
- **Advisory Group Feedback:** Members raised thoughtful questions and shared perspectives that included the desire for the bridge to reflect local character, support active transportation, incorporate storytelling elements, and feel welcoming and safe. Participants emphasized the importance of clear views, distinct landmarks, meaningful transitions between land and bridge, and inclusive design that strengthens connections across the river. Feedback also highlighted the potential for the bridge to serve as a space for community gathering and cultural expression.

ACTION ITEMS

- None

WELCOME

CAG Co-Chair Ed Washington welcomed attendees and introduced Dr. Roberta Hunte, EAG Facilitator, who explained Zoom and YouTube logistics, and introduced the meeting agenda.

ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS OVERVIEW

Casey Liles, IBR Delivery Manager, and Shilpa Mallem, IBR Design Manager, provided an overview of architectural elements. Shilpa explained that the purpose of the presentation is to identify a program-wide vision and guidelines for architecture and aesthetics, meant to build on the architectural guidance developed by the Columbia River Crossing project. Shilpa stated that the goal for the discussion is to communicate the program's current work to the community and obtain their feedback, which will inform the Program-wide guidelines on architecture that will be incorporated into design and construction documents.

Arianna Levantesi and Tom Osborne, IBR Program Architects, then provided information on where the Program is in the architectural process. Arianna stated that the IBR Program is currently in the conceptual/preliminary design phase of refinement, approaching that final design. Arianna described this phase as the "design envelope," which provides parameters of the design, but is still flexible for adjustment.

Arianna shared that good design includes three simple steps: why/who (defined by principles and goals), how (architectural characteristic), and what (design response). She explained that there are several major components to the bridge and that the meeting's focus will be on the main bridge crossing.

Advisory Group Member Question: Do we have a timeframe for the end of the conceptual/preliminary design and the beginning of the final design?

Shilpa responded that the final design stage is waiting for the Record of Decision (ROD) to be issued related to the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS).

Principles and Goals

Arianna discussed the principles and goals of the design, stating that they are considered from a "view of" and "experience from" perspective, meaning how people look at it from afar and how the bridge makes them feel. Arianna then reviewed the physical design constraints, namely air traffic above and water traffic below. She stated that the next step is to select a bridge type, from which specific refinements can be made to meet the unique needs of the river crossing.

Architectural Characteristic – "View Of"

Arianna and Tom explained "architectural characteristic" as the physical elements that would be implemented to achieve the principles and goals of the project.

Arianna discussed the concept of identity, meaning what makes a bridge have a strong sense of place. She shared that a key consideration in determining this identity is the underside of the bridge, as that will be the primary place at which the bridge is perceived on both waterfronts. She shared the concept of clarity, meaning that the bridge is legible from every angle to encourage use and be a positive

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contribution to the area. Ariana next shared the principle of simplicity, meaning reducing the visual complexity of the structure. She further shared the concept of quality, which provides that the bridge should be visually attractive from all perspectives so that users and onlookers are both delighted and proud of it.

Advisory Group Member Comment: Regarding the bridge's contribution to the visual character, it lacks reflection of our region. It is utilitarian and could be located anywhere; it doesn't have a distinct identity.

Advisory Group Member Comment: The bridge is detrimental to the landscape as an industrial response without aesthetic guidance. Unique is not necessarily a benefit. More integration into the landscape instead of opposition to the landscape, and consistency of character, will give identity and a sense of belonging.

Advisory Group Member Question: How would the underbridge design help reduce noise? That's a huge issue with the existing bridge.

Advisory Group Member Question: I have a question about designs under the bridge. How much can that shave from the height from the top of the river to the bottom of the bridge?

Tom responded that the bridge height must stay within the design envelope to allow for water navigation, so the designs do not significantly change the height. Casey addressed the question about noise, saying that the current bridge's limitation is that the active transportation area is immediately adjacent to the bridge, and the new bridge will have more distance between those traveling by vehicle versus those walking, biking, or rolling. Tom added that the design and materials can all contribute to managing noise. Shilpa added that the SEIS includes assessing the impacts and mitigations of noise.

Architectural Characteristic – “Experience From”

Arianna explained that a key concept in understanding the experience of a bridge is to consider it from a human perspective. Arianna shared that the human element is often overlooked in bridge design, with narrow spaces for pedestrians that lack a sense of unique and safe space. Arianna explained the next characteristic as user comfort, meaning that the bridge is a convenient and enjoyable experience for all. Arianna explained that the length of the bridge necessitates the consideration of resting places for those walking, biking, or rolling. She explained that the bridge must also adapt to the urban context it serves, a concept she referred to as “local response.” Arianna stated that the bridge is important on the national scale for its economic contributions, but that it must also be situated to its environment for local and non-vehicular users.

Advisory Group Member Question: I don't see details about navigation below the bridge in these slides, will that be included in addition to the navigation on top?

Tom replied that the bridge will include all navigational requirements, and those details will be developed later in the process.

Advisory Group Member Question: Thinking about the Baltimore bridge crash and collapse, how safe can those pier bottoms be?

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Casey replied that the bottom of the bridge is being designed to withstand seismic activity, allow for water vessel passage, and to survive a strike as described. Shilpa added that safety comes first in the design.

Advisory Group Member Comment: The transitions between the shared use path and other spaces will be absolutely critical.

Advisory Group Member Question: What color will bridge elements be?

Tom replied that color has not been selected, but that the design will try to express continuity and consistency, and that colors will try to achieve that as well as giving it a sense of identity and differentiation from surrounding structures.

Advisory Group Member Question: These images assume the 116ft vertical height, correct?

Tom replied that it does. He added that the height can change based on the selection of bridge type, but the renderings all assume the same height.

Advisory Group Member Question: I know the pedestrian/bike area is on the east side to get the best views of Mount Hood, were the rest points considered for those views? Currently they look like they are in the way of the biking/walking path.

Casey replied that the viewpoints are for the lower speed area of the path, which is the outside edge. The outer railing has the best view. Tom added that a variety of techniques are being explored to maximize how people can enjoy the best views, while still addressing the need for people to rest due to the length of the bridge. He emphasized that the different speeds at which people will experience the bridge necessitate unique considerations for their travel.

Advisory Group Member Comment: I'm not sure about the sense of connection between Portland and Vancouver being improved by this bridge. It's a huge bridge and the two cities are very different. The river is a break between those communities. If I don't have a map, I navigate by the towers on the existing bridge. All the diagrams we saw today look like you're taking off those elements. Esther Short Park is my favorite outdoor space because it is beautiful, has a sense of place, and has a huge belltower in the corner to pull it together.

Tom appreciated the feedback. Casey added that the diagrams represented one type of bridge, but that there are multiple types still being considered, so there may still be towers or super structures comparable to the existing bridge.

Advisory Group Member Comment: I think a bridge can create a sense of connection between communities, especially thinking about those who were priced out of Portland. Folks who live in Vancouver often work, worship, and socialize in Portland. Even though the cities look distinctly different, they share community members. I also like Vancouver public spaces; the waterfront is especially well-developed and is attracting a lot of people from Portland. It has a lot of natural spaces and tells the story of the first people in the region. The landscaping is well done, and the interactive structures tell the story of the land.

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Tom replied that considerations for storytelling and art will be part of the finer detail work that the larger elements will provide opportunities to maximize.

Advisory Group Member Comment: I like farmers' markets on both sides of the river. Having the bridge be accommodating of a connected farmers' market would be a future dream.

Tom replied that it's a great aspiration to provide those spaces and opportunities for those events, saying he went to a pickle festival on a bridge just last year.

Advisory Group Member Comment: Having a bridge that is welcoming to walks and runs would be huge to support events on each side of the river. We currently discourage events near the bridge because it is so unwelcoming. Also, I'm a huge advocate for integrating the story of our landscape. Vancouver has a strong architectural identity using brick; it ties our downtown together. Integrating that somehow would be distinct in tying it to downtown Vancouver.

Tom replied that there is a great opportunity to include unique textures, materials, and colors that reflect the local community.

Advisory Group Member Comment: The current bridge has a distinct vintage vibe, and people always ask me about the green bridge in Vancouver and Portland. To me, it seems like it has a distinctive look and character. If there's a way to capture a more modernized look going forward, I think it would help reinvigorate this region. As far as thinking about it as "our bridge," I think a modern, sleek, highly functional bridge that meets the needs of the community while telling the story of the region would be good. As a commuter, light rail would be the way I'd expect to go over the bridge.

Advisory Group Member Comment: The bridge's vintage nature creates fear and anxiety for me when I cross it. It's really tight going across and you can't see through it. I'd like it to be more open. I like the idea of the clear views of the mountains, so it's not so claustrophobic, and scary to change lanes in the tight corridor. I've never walked across the bridge due to comfort and safety concerns.

Tom replied that it's hard for anyone to appreciate storytelling elements or art if they're not feeling safe, so creating that sense of safety is important.

Advisory Group Member Comment: The transition from land to the bridge itself, by any form of transportation, is important. If it is difficult to get on and off the bridge, it will not be friendly or inviting. Without that easy invitation, I will see it as someone else's bridge, not mine.

Tom affirmed the sentiment that having an open, welcoming invitation from the bridge for all users is critical and shared that the next work session will discuss those transitions.

Advisory Group Member Comment: If there are peers who are using the bridge, that will encourage me to use active transportation more.

Greg Johnson, IBR Program Administrator, offered closing thoughts. Greg praised the advisory group members for their insights and helping shape the design of the bridge to meet the needs of each community

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while also bringing them together. Greg encouraged advisory group members to keep bringing their creative energy and robust conversation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jenna, Portland Resident: I wanted to address some things brought up in the meeting. I think one of the things about the current bridge is often how quiet the bike lanes are compared to the 205 bridge. That bike lane is right in the middle, so it's noisy and dirty from road debris. It's fundamentally unpleasant. For the future, I'd like to have the approach on the bridge be a lot easier. Those climbs are kind of intense, so having the bridge have a nice steady, but not too drawn out, climb would be really lovely. That, along with the TriMet Max transit would really bring the two cities together.

ADJOURN

ATTENDEES

Attendees	Organization/Affiliation
CAG & EAG Members	
Aidan Gronauer	WSDOT
Brenda Martin	Portland Bureau of Transportation
Chandra Washington	C-TRAN
Dena Horton	Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
Ed Washington	CAG Co-Chair
Gerina Hatch	Community in Motion
Irina Phillips	East European Coalition
Jana Jarvis	Oregon Trucking Association
Jennifer Campos	SW Washington Regional Transportation Council
John Gardner	TriMet
Jonathan Eder	Port of Vancouver
Joy Fowler	City of Vancouver

Attendees	Organization/Affiliation
Julie Doumbia	Community Member
June Reyes	Port of Portland
Lynn Valenter	CAG Co-Chair
Marcus Mundy	Coalition of Communities of Color
Martha Wiley	Public Transit Representative, Washington
Meg Johnson	Community Member
Mikaela Williams	Community Member
Miriam Halliday	Workforce SW
Nicole Chen	City of Vancouver
Sebrina Owens-Wilson	Metro
Sheri Call	Washington Trucking Association
Shona Carter	Community Member
Sokho Eath	IRCO
Tom Hickey	Bridgeton Neighborhood Association
Vicki Nakashima	Community Member
IBR Staff	
Dr. Roberta Suzette Hunte	EAG Facilitator
Lisa Keohokalole Schauer	CAG Lead
Johnell Bell	Program Fair Access Officer
Greg Johnson	Program Administrator
Arianna Levantesi	Program Architect
Tom Osborne	Program Architect

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Attendees	Organization/Affiliation
Casey Liles	Delivery Manager
Shilpa Mallem	Design Manager
Ray Mabey	Assistant Program Administrator
Paige Schlupp	Assistant Program Administrator
Fabiola Casas	Community Benefits Team
Robert Turton	Structures Lead
Steve Katko	Civil Design Lead
Bryan Stebbins	Public Affairs Team
Brenda Torres Siragusa	Community Benefits Team
Amanda and Andrea	ASL Interpreters
Christine	Captioner
Amanda Hart	Tech Support

MEETING RECORDING AND MATERIALS

Meeting Recording

A recording of the meeting is available here: [Community Benefits Advisory Group \(CAG\) + Equity Advisory Group \(EAG\) July 21, 2025 4:00PM PST \(youtube.com\)](#)

Meeting Materials

The meeting materials are available here: [Community Benefits Advisory Group \(CAG\) + Equity Advisory Group \(EAG\) July 21, 2025 Meeting | Interstate Bridge Replacement Program](#)