

EXECUTIVE STEERING GROUP (ESG) MEETING

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING SUMMARY

June 15, 2022 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

ESG Members in Attendance: UMO Director Brendan Finn (ODOT)(alternate), SW Region Administrator Carley Francis (WSDOT)(alternate), President Lynn Peterson (Metro), Director Chris Warner (City of Portland)(alternate), Executive Director Curtis Robinhold (Port of Portland), Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle (City of Vancouver), CEO Julianna Marler (Port of Vancouver), General Manager Sam Desue (TriMet), Director Matt Ransom (RTC), CEO Shawn Donaghy (C-TRAN), CAG Co-Chair Lynn Valenter, CAG Co-Chair Ed Washington

ESG Members not in Attendance: Director Kris Strickler (ODOT), Secretary Roger Millar (WSDOT), Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty (City of Portland)

IBR Program Staff in Attendance: Greg Johnson (Program Administrator), John Willis (Program Manager), Ray Mabey (Assistant Program Administrator), Frank Green (Assistant Program Administrator), Millicent Williams (Lead Facilitator)

WELCOME, INTRODUCTION, PROPOSED AGENDA AND UPDATES

Millicent Williams, Lead Facilitator, opened the meeting by introducing everyone who was attending, noting that participating staff will introduce themselves and provide any area updates.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES

What We've Heard

Administrator Johnson gave an update on what the program has heard from the different boards, councils, and commissions. (Slide 10 and 11). Administrator Greg wanted to emphasize that this is not the final decision on what will ultimately be built, what is proposed is what the program considers this to be the underpinnings of the program that they will take into the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) process.

Administrator Johnson provided a brief report back from the Port of Vancouver Board of Commissioners who voiced some concern over the auxiliary lanes, specifically if one auxiliary lane will be enough to service the freight needs of their community going into the future.

Slide 13 highlighted the two-week look ahead for upcoming meetings with the program partner boards, councils, and commissions to get endorsement on the Modified Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).

Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle, City of Vancouver, wanted to verify the Tri-Met was voting on June 22nd. Administrator Johnson stated that is correct.

Before Administrator Johnson passed the floor to Ray Mabey, he wanted to point out that the notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) for the Big Bridge Federal Grant Program recently was released. The approach for this funding has changed. They are asking for entities to apply for planning grant funds before the program applies for construction funding. The program's intent in the next month is to pull together the application for the planning grant funding. By doing this, it will put the program in line to apply for future construction grant funding. The Mega Project Funding is being handled differently as well and the program hopes to submit their application for funding in 2023 upon hearing from the Oregon Legislature.

Additionally, the program received a memo from the Equity Advisory Group (EAG) with concerns regarding transit equity. The program has conducted multiple meetings with the City of Vancouver and CTRAN to address the issues that were brought up, specifically the terminus at the Evergreen Station. Administrator Johnson noted that additional alternatives will be analyzed through the equity lens in the next phase which should address any concerns.

UPDATE – COAST GUARD NAVIGATION CLEARANCE PERMIT PROCESS

Ray Mabey, Assistant Program Administrator, provided an update on the US Coast Guard Navigation Clearance Permit Process. (Slide 14)

Last year, the program submitted a navigation impact report to the US Coast Guard (USCG) detailing impacts to navigation based on a vertical river clearance of 116-feet. This dimension was validated to ensure the needs and uses of marine traffic can be accommodated. In the coming days, the program expects the USCG to use a Preliminary Navigation Clearance Determination; a final permit will not be issued until 2025-2026. With this preliminary determination, the Program expects a request for higher clearance. This is challenged by FAA requirements, grades of the bridge ramps for vehicles, transit, and active transportation uses. The Program will continue to work with USCG in this ongoing conversation, including preparing a written assessment detailing the impacts of a movable span.

Responding to questions from the partners, Mr. Mabey stated that the upcoming investigations will be brought into the NEPA process to more clearly understand the impacts of bridge clearance and support the current design direction. The technical team will provide information showing that a higher clearance and

moveable span have a higher cost and greater number of impacts. In fact, this structure will demand one of the largest lift spans in the world. Administrator Johnson added that the program has heard clearly from the ESG and bi-state legislative committee that there is no interest in repeating a movable bridge on I-5. This is a keystone assumption for the program. Understanding that the USCG has permitting rights for the Columbia River, the program is prepared to address the matter in several ways.

PROGRAM COMMITMENTS

Frank Green, Assistant Program Administrator, presented on the progress of developing program commitments with each partner agency. The LPA was the foundation, but each partner has a list of items that will be addressed through future work or analysis, including active transportation; climate/sustainability; community; contracting/construction; design; equity; finance plan; freight; tolling; and transit. Boards and Councils may include other topic areas when identifying commitments.

Administrator Johnson addressed concerns about inflation and overall project risk related to rising costs. He noted that the preliminary cost estimate is based on broad concepts, and technical staff will be refining the construction estimate. It is common for large federal projects go through cost escalation risks. Mr. Johnson noted that an “investment-grade traffic study” was also requested, but this is used to gather totally different information and is initiated to satisfy bondholders for the viability of payback – this study will occur much later in the Program. This is not the tool to optimize numbers of lanes and design of the system – that work has been completed with existing studies. Administrator Johnson reinforced that the Program is at a 2% design. As the technical team goes through the NEPA process, we will get to a 10-15% level of design.

DEBRIEF OF ADVISORY GROUP PROGRAM AREA TOUR

Robin Richardson, CAG member, presented on his experience relating to the on-site tour. Led by a few SLG members, the group gained an appreciation for the constraints of existing buildings and facilities with the new bridge influence area. They are aware of the future needs by Clark College and the current investments by the City of Vancouver and C-Tran. This effort helped the group gain context for the Program. CAG co-chair Ed Washington echoed these sentiments. ODOT graciously thanked the CAG members for their volunteer time and dedication to get this project right.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

[1:05:31] Karen Gibson. Thank you for the outreach that you guys did to me. I will be in touch regarding my comments that I have today, I have many comments. I'd like to understand, the main thing is how Hurley

development is able to know that they can build a huge apartment complex right next to the bridge but those of us who live I-5 adjacent to the freeway right in the same project line are being told it could be next year before we know anything.

I wanted to let you know that we got the letter about them coming out to do the field survey and within five days of receiving the letter they were out here taking pictures. I also noted that we have received new property tax assessments and I'm not sure how that is going to impact our value of our homes for those who live I-5 adjacent, but the main thing is in terms of this understanding how to touch, smell, and wrap out arms around this transparent project for those of us who live I-5 adjacent. I'd really like to understand if anybody in those advisory groups, especially the community advisory group actually lives I-5 adjacent and is living with this project over the course of this timeframe so, like I said, I will be following up with emails back to the city regarding my questions today. I did want to let you know that from our perspective there's a lot of work going in the last week and it does not seem to be reflected in any of the work that you guys are doing in terms of speaking to this I-5 adjacent community and I would really encourage you to do that because the letters that you sent out did cause some alarm for some people in this I-5 adjacent community. I think this should be heard as well. Thank you very much for your time.

[1:07:15] John Lei: Good morning ladies and gentlemen, John Lei private citizen in Clark County. I am amazed at this process where you have done incredible outreach for what the people want but you have ignored their input. The people say they want faster transit service and yet you have chosen the slowest possible transit service in max light rail. It only goes 14 miles an hour because it's got to stop every single mile it travels. CTRAN's BRT would travel twice as fast, giving the people what they want in terms of transit.

I am also amazed that the reality of this project is that traffic congestion will double by 2045 according to what you have told the citizens. Administrator Johnson said you can not put a lift span in the bridge because it would add to traffic congestion and yet the reality of your own project says that commute times will double by 2045 going to 60 minutes from the I-5/I-205 Interchange at Salmon Creek Fremont Bridge from the current 28-29 minutes.

Furthermore, your own projections say that the number of vehicles stuck in 0-20 mile an hour traffic will become half of all traffic during commute times from the present 28. Again, this is not solving the problem people want solved most and this is reducing traffic congestion, improving travel times and faster transit. From the standpoint of transit in Sound Transit in Seattle, they are considering a tunnel for their next light rail

expansion and in the alternative if they don't spend money on that they are proposing a bridge that will have 135 feet of clearance. Light rail can handle taller bridges. Thank you.

CONFIRM UPCOMING MEETING TOPICS, NEXT STEPS AND SUMMARY

ESG meeting are scheduled for July 21st, 2022. Millicent noted that is also the date for the next bi-state legislative committee meeting. During these meetings the ESG will consider a consensus recommendation to move the Modified LPA into the SDIS process for further evaluation and the same action will be asked to be taken at the bi-state legislative committee meeting.

Final comments from the Greg Johnson Program Administrator. He thanked everyone again for the time and effort that's being put into this effort. He recognized the hours of dedication by the ESG members and their staff.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 am.

MEETING RECORD AND MATERIALS

Meeting Recording

A recording of the meeting is available here:

https://youtu.be/h91_4d_3jAw

The meeting materials are available here:

<https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/esg-june-15-2022-meeting/>