

EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP (EAG) MEETING #8

Subject: EAG Meeting #8 Summary

Date and Time: Monday, July 19, 2021, 5:30pm to 7:30pm

Location: Zoom Webinar and YouTube Livestream

Number of concurrent live YouTube viewers: 9

WELCOME

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

- Program Administrator update
- IBR bridge stories
- Community engagement update
- Equity screening criteria development
- Equity framework development
- Public comment
- Wrap up

1. IBR BRIDGE STORY

Jake Warr presented the IBR Bridge Story featuring Elvia Santos Dominguez. The full video series is available on the program website and on YouTube.

2. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

Greg Johnson, Program Administrator, shared updates from correspondence with the Bi-state Legislative Committee. The Committee is currently reviewing the schedule put forth by IBR. This schedule includes ongoing work by the program to review options for high-capacity transit and lane capacity. The program is also examining the Hayden Island interchange and the North Portland Harbor bridge. Greg explained that the Equity Advisory Group will be presented with design options that are developed. The EAG may join the program in addressing the Bi-State Legislature on the subject of equity.

Next he shared updates on the Executive Steering Group (ESG) meeting held on July 15 that went over the Climate Framework, Community Advisory Group (CAG) Community Values and Priorities, and the iterative progress on the IBR program that calls for the development of screening criteria and design options in conjunction with each other. Greg used the analogy of a “spinning circle” which takes input, cycles around, takes more input, and continues to cycle around until it outputs a design option which meets the equity, climate, and other goals of the IBR program.

Greg also shared a summary of the CAG meeting earlier in the month. The CAG was presented with an introduction to how design options will be developed and build off prior work and the unique conditions that have developed since previous planning efforts. The co-chairs of the group will also be speaking with each individual CAG member to hear about their experiences one-on-one. The next CAG meeting will be on August 5th and it will introduce the Climate and Equity frameworks.

Q&A

- An EAG member asked if the performance measures discussed with the CAG will be shared for input with the EAG. Greg explained that the performance measures will be how the program will assess the success of the project. The EAG will have an opportunity to speak with IBR Environmental Lead Angela Findley about the performance measures. Johnell clarified that the EAG will have a central role in determining the performance measures in the late summer and fall.
- One EAG member shared that the Bridge Stories video was great but requested that it be more accessible to vision-impaired individuals when later presented by including auditory descriptions of visual content. They also expressed their concern that the timeline for the EAG was too quick. Greg responded that since the program is building upon prior work, there is a lot that doesn't need to be revisited in order to speed the process along. He assured the EAG that no steps will be skipped. He said that it's also important to attract funding from the federal government, which is currently reviewing a number of serious infrastructure bills, by showing that the project will be complete in a reasonable timeframe.
- Another EAG member followed up on the previous question and appreciated the importance of building off prior work. They underlined how critical it is for the EAG to be informed of that legislative context.

3. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

Lisa Schauer updated the EAG on the efforts within the CAG to reach consensus on the Community Values & Priorities. This document will inform the initial performance measures that are being developed within the IBR program now, and it will also shape the program outcomes and screening criteria.

Six Community Listening Sessions have been held from April to June on specific topics that the community deems important. The results of those sessions are available on the program website. Nine more Listening Sessions will be held from July to August with often unheard communities. Lisa called upon the EAG to reach out if they have ideas for individuals to feature in Bridge Stories.

Q&A

- An EAG member asked Lisa if information about the Listening Sessions was available on the website, to which Lisa responded that they are.
- Another member asked how community members are being brought into the Listening Sessions. Lisa explained that the team has been using social media and community organizations to reach out to the community and told the EAG to let the Lisa know if there are any other outreach opportunities that they think are important. Johnell underlined that point and detailed the incentives available to community members who contribute their time to the program's outreach efforts. One EAG member offered the services of their community organization for outreach.

4. EQUITY SCREENING CRITERIA DEVELOPMENT

Jake explained the outcome of the meeting with an EAG subgroup involved in developing the Equity Screening Criteria. The subgroup informed the team that the EAG needed more detail on the design options currently available for the bridge, so Alex Prentiss, IBR Cross-Discipline Coordination Lead, came to share those details.

First, Alex reviewed the IBR Program Timeline. The main IBR "North Star" targets include an integrated program which includes:

- A replacement crossing over the Columbia River
- High-capacity transit
- Interchange improvements

- Active transportation improvements
- To identify and advance a single IBR alternative by the end of 2021
- To achieve path 2 or 3 in NEPA (a supplemental EIS)
- To begin construction no later than 2025
- To replace the North Portland Harbor Bridge

In 2021 and 2022, the program will be developing and screening design options. Alex showed the EAG a map of the program area with a list of major decisions that the IBR team will be making and the process for making them equitable and climate-friendly.

Ryan LeProwse, IBR Transportation Planning Manager, broke down the major transportation determinations that will be made by the program.

- Transit options
 - Alignment and routing of high-capacity transit, particularly on Hayden Island
 - High-capacity transit mode
 - Integration of high-capacity transit into Downtown Vancouver
 - Park and ride locations and sizes
- Roadway
 - Interchange locations and layout, particularly on Hayden Island
 - Limitations to local street improvements
 - Bridge configuration and height
 - Number of auxiliary lanes
 - Replacing the North Portland Harbor Bridge
 - Extending Main Street in Downtown Vancouver to the Vancouver Waterfront, which the City of Vancouver remains committed to from previous planning efforts

- Active Transportation
 - Connections to existing routes
 - Direct routes for regional users
 - A shared-use path connection to the Vancouver Waterfront, which the City of Vancouver remains committed to from previous planning efforts
 - A Community Connector or highway cap that would connect the east and west sides of Downtown Vancouver, which the City of Vancouver remains committed to from previous planning efforts

Alex explained that these are not the only decisions that will be made in the program and the options presented to the EAG are the “high-level,” nonspecific choices being made. Alex concluded her presentation by inviting questions from the EAG.

Q&A

- An EAG member asked Alex if the presentation considered pedestrian traffic. Ryan explained that Active Transportation includes pedestrian traffic and other non-motor vehicle traffic.
- Another EAG member asked if the screening criteria would be used to evaluate or develop design options. Alex explained that neither the screening criteria and design options will come first; rather, they will both iterate off of each other. Greg explained that there is a limit to the number of options for the bridge and that the screening criteria will refine that list of options.

Jake explained that the EAG subgroup will meet again to discuss screening criteria for the project and bring them to the full EAG next month.

5. EQUITY FRAMEWORK UPDATE

Chris Lepe from the IBR Equity Panel provided the EAG a development schedule for the Equity Framework. Staff wants to confirm the Framework outline with the EAG and create a first draft, with a final draft brought to the EAG for consensus by October. An EAG member requested that the schedule include the iterative process described by Alex.

The outline currently includes context for the project, how the program is operationalizing equity, the framework products, equity glossary, and authors. Johnell explained that the project is integrating equity in a number of different ways and explained that the Equity Framework is a blueprint for the framework products: equity lens, screening criteria, equity index, performance measures, mitigation and equity enhancement commitments, and other products.

Johnell then transitioned to explaining the role of the IBR Equity Lens, which seeks to inform the program’s approach to achieving equitable outcomes. The lens questions guide the IBR program and teams towards equitable processes and outcomes. It explicitly draws attention to the inclusion of historically marginalized communities and helps IBR team members discuss and reflect on whether the action and decision-making processes advance equity. An equity lens can be applied in both a formal and informal manner. The current draft of the Equity Lens pairs lens questions with Equity Objectives.

Johnell explained that the EAG members will be asked to review the Equity Lens questions and stressed that the questions need not be perfect as long as they are effective in “socializing” an equity lens within the IBR teams.

Equity Objective	DRAFT Equity Lens Question
<p>Mobility & Accessibility: Improve mobility, accessibility, and connectivity in the program area, with a particular focus on the needs of lower income travelers, people with disabilities, and communities who experience transportation barriers related to the location of affordable housing.</p>	<p>What are the demographics and travel patterns of those living, working, or otherwise accessing the project area? Are all potentially impacted and vulnerable populations within the project area boundaries?</p> <p>Are key community destinations and critical services that are regularly used by Priority Communities being considered, and are any missing? Are these destinations and services informed by community input?</p>
<p>Avoiding Further Harm: Avoid</p>	<p>Are the standard regulatory requirements (e.g.,</p>

<p>disproportionate impacts on communities of concern while implementing substantial mitigations for any unavoidable, but proportional, impacts.</p>	<p>Title VI, Environmental Justice) enough to answer essential questions related to the equity implications of the project/action/decision? If not, what other tools/strategies can we use?</p> <p>Can all key equity issues/questions be analyzed? What are the limitations of available data? How might we fill information gaps?</p> <p>Are there any potential negative impacts or unintended consequences resulting from the action/decision? Have we asked the community what the potential impacts and side-effects might be and how such impacts might be avoided or reduced?</p> <p>Are there any equity issues or concerns raised for which the project/action/decision is unable to provide resolution? If so, how will such issues be communicated?</p>
<p>Decision Making Processes: Prioritize access, participation, influence, and decision-making power for marginalized and underserved communities throughout the course of the program in establishing objectives, design, implementation, and evaluation of success.</p>	<p>Who needs to be in the conversation? Who is missing? How are affected/impacted community members being actively engaged in the project/action/decision?</p> <p>Do we have everything we need to help advance equity through this phase/activity? For example, do we need capacity building?</p>

How are Priority Communities being meaningfully involved and centered in the process? How will we ensure input is representative of Priority Communities in the project area? What can we do to avoid traditional actions/tactics that result in unequal input/voice?

Is information being distributed to inform the public and Priority Communities of how to influence decision-making at each step in the process?

Who are the right messengers to communicate/reach the Priority Communities in the project area? Are those conducting outreach culturally competent and connected to the Priority Communities?

Are the comments and priorities of Priority Communities being actively catalogued? Are there plans to respond to and address this input in a clear and transparent way?

Is the way in which decisions are being made creating greater transparency and trust with Priority Communities? What approaches might create a greater sense of ownership by Priority Communities?

	<p>How is the current issue, policy, or program shifting power dynamics to better integrate the voices of Priority Communities?</p>
	<p>How will we continue to partner and deepen relationships with Priority Communities over the long-term?</p>
	<p>What did Priority Communities tell us about their concerns, needs, and priorities? Does the project/action/decision directly meet their needs and expectations?</p>
	<p>Evaluating success: How did we do What could we do differently moving forward/next time?</p>
<p>Physical Design: Integrate equity into the physical design elements of the program</p>	<p>How do the existing conditions and historical context inform program design?</p>
	<p>Do we have everything we need to help advance equity through the design process? If not, how can we bridge those gaps?</p>
	<p>What can be achieved within the scope of the project/action/decision vs what will require partnerships and other strategies?</p>

	<p>To what extent are design elements “human-centered” (i.e. responding to the needs of individual users)?</p>
<p>Community Benefits: Find opportunities for and implement local community improvements, in addition to required mitigations</p>	<p>Do we have everything we need to help advance equity through this phase/activity? If not, how can we bridge those gaps?</p>
	<p>What can be achieved within the scope of the project/action/decision vs what will require partnerships and other strategies?</p>
	<p>What will be done, by who, and by when? Who is responsible for oversight and determining if the project meets its goals and commitments to Priority Communities and on which timeline?</p>
	<p>Are equity commitments and implementing actions reported publicly and transparently?</p>
	<p>How will the results of the project/action/decision be evaluated and communicated back to Priority Communities and other stakeholders? What were we able to accomplish for Priority Communities? Are communities that are affected by the project/action/decision better off?</p>
<p>Economic Opportunity: Ensure that economic</p>	<p>What are the existing/historical disparities in the</p>

<p>opportunities generated by the program, including contracting and workforce development, substantially benefit minority and women owned firms, workers of color, workers with disabilities, and young people.</p>	<p>project area? Why do such disparities exist? What actions have the responsible agencies taken in the past that disproportionately harmed Priority Communities in the project area?</p> <p>Does the analysis show that the equity objectives for the project will be achieved? How will project benefits and impacts be distributed geographically and demographically? How will the project/action/decision improve conditions for Priority Communities, not just avoid/reduce harm?</p>
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Small Group Discussions

The EAG split into small groups to discuss the Equity Lens questions and answer these prompts:

- What do you like about the questions?
- What improvements would you like made to the questions? What's missing?
- How would you like to see the Equity Lens used?

EAG members engaged in a Jamboard exercise, which depicts sticky notes posted onto a whiteboard. The images of the jamboard are included below followed by the comments as text directly in this document.

July 19th, 2021

What do you like about the questions?

- Appreciate the product. Great start.
- likes that the questions attempts to clarify we aren't looking for status quo
- Questions capture we aren't looking to check the box.
- the questions center the community---community centric approach.
- Mob & Access: Creation of a demographic profile of users of the corridor. Good baseline to start with.
- Mob & Access: 1st question complements the 2nd questions. They go hand in hand.

What improvements would you like to see/what's missing?

- How are we taking into account intersectionality of identities with relation to mobility and accessibility - how are we going to have a robust lens that takes into account disability +
- Can we articulate who is to benefit from each intervention. We need to think about the structure and I want you to think about how does the structure solve for the people.
- When talking about mobility and accessibility we are solving this question for all kinds of disabilities including the neurodivergent
- Mob & Access: Clarify potentially impacted/boundaries question, and who that's referring to
- Where are the key destinations for reference?
- Mob & Access: Analysis, and then what? That information alone doesn't point us in the right direction. Are we looking for disparities? Access issues? And then what?
- What is the clear problem we are trying to solve? Is it moving people through this area?
- Mob & Access: Disaggregate different populations and their travel patterns. Ex. separate long-distance commuters/goods movement from people living next to the freeway.
- The equity lens must tell me the technical problem we are going to solve and how does this solve needs for people.
- Physical Design - Second question is too broad. Is it intentional? Make it more specific. Need to flesh it out.
- Physical Design - What do we actually have now so we can ID the gaps.
- Physical Design - Future presenters should explain to the EAC how their design is human centered?
- Physical Design - What does integration mean and put numbers behind it? Are there grading scales, for example in regards to universal access (compliance vs going above & beyond)?
- Physical Design - Make sure to articulate the elements of what physical design =

How would you like to see the Equity Lens used?

- Open discussion w/in IBR teams
- Would like to see the lens used on every critical decision
- We need to be clear about who will be asking these questions/who is responsible for it.
- Implemented in each of the programmatic areas "micro" levels
- Having a clear path of how this tool will be used -- being transparent.
- How does the Equity Lens connect to the decision making structure?

Other miscellaneous comments and questions

- With the equity lens what are the state min standards related to disability access? Does that get us to equity? Can we do more?
- What problem do we want to solve with the bridge? Is it multiple destinations? Is it just the bridge? How do we drill down for intersectionality?
- Who are we solving for? Are we thinking about multiple kids who have to use 3 buses to get somewhere?
- What is the access at the interchanges?
- How do these options make transit most attractive to people?
- What are the costs, and time that occur with that. Thinking about origins and destinations of populations of concern.
- Demographics - do we know who lives in the area and where is the area headed? Is it an aging population?

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The group returned to the main Zoom room for a report out.

- EAG member: We wanted to be clear about what problem this program is going to solve on the technical side. How does that technical side of the problem address the intersectional challenges faced by people such as those with disabilities? Currently, children with disabilities have to take multiple buses to cross the river. Does the technical problem-solving of the bridge solve those intersectional issues? How will the equity criteria be applied as an evaluation for thinking during technical problem-solving? Who will be at the table to help?
- EAG member: The Equity Lens asks the right questions. We want to look closely at the demographics in areas affected by the program and the questions achieve that goal.
- Roberta Hunte: A key takeaway from our group is the concern of: what is the technical problem that people are trying to solve and how does that address the needs of the bridge users, including animals? How are people, in their multiple identities, able to utilize the bridge?
- Johnell Bell: Our group liked the questions and sought to clarify that as a program, we're not just looking to "check the box," but rather that the questions capture what we're trying to achieve with our communities of priority. Room for improvement: how will the questions be operationalized? Who will be asking these questions and who is responsible? The group wanted to see the Equity Lens used in open discussions within the IBR teams, in critical decisions, and in each of the program areas at a micro-level.
- Jake Warr: There needs to be some more specificity in the really broad questions that may be difficult to apply without some more "meat on those bones." For example, as we're talking about the vulnerable communities we want to address, we should define those communities using our Equity Definition. When we say "to destinations," what are those destinations we're trying to consider? There is a lack of clarity, particularly in these early stages, of what it looks like to integrate equity into the physical design of the bridge. There's some work to be done, but there's support for what has been started.

6. WRAP UP

Dr. Roberta Hunte asked the EAG for the three takeaways from the meeting.

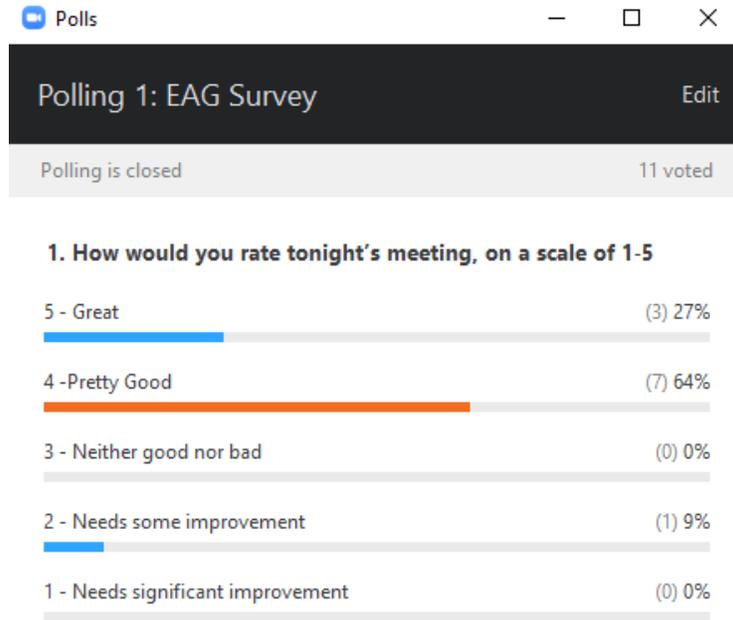
- EAG member: Jake was right on, this is a great start. The program has done a ton of work and while there's a lot that still needs to be done, there's a lot of work to build on.
- EAG member: I appreciated the discussion of how the screening criteria and performance measures will be moving hand-in-hand with the design elements and that they'll be talking to each other rather than one coming before the other. It would be good to have that consistently checked up on to ensure that those questions are being asked and reported on.
- EAG member: Thank you to Johnell and his team for the work that they're doing and the questions they came up with. Thank you for leading this effort.
 - Jake Warr: We didn't come up with this on our own! A lot of this was pulled from past meetings with the EAG and CAG, so thank you.

ADJOURN

Roberta and Greg closed out the meeting by explaining the agenda for the next meeting and thanking the EAG for their time and efforts. The next EAG meeting will be on August 16th from 5:30 to 7:30 pm and will discuss the first draft of the Equity Framework, more on the screening criteria, and the nexus of climate and equity.

EAG members were asked to answer a Zoom poll: How would you rate tonight's meeting on a scale of 1-5? Eleven votes were counted, with three members voting "5 – Great," seven members voting "4 – Pretty Good," and one member voting "2 – Needs some improvement."

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.



ATTENDEES

Attendees	Affiliation
EAG Members	
Matt Serres	Disability Rights Oregon
Matthew Hines	Community member
Monica Tellez-Fowler	C-TRAN
John Gardner	TriMet
Jonathan Eder	Port of Vancouver USA
Sebrina Owens-Wilson	Metro
Steven Nakana	Port of Portland

Attendees	Affiliation
Hai That Ho Ton	Community member
Megan Marie Johnson	Community member
Masha Egorenko	IRCO Slavic & Eastern European Center
Obie Ford III	WSU-Vancouver
Caitlin Francis Reff	Portland Bureau of Transportation
Pat Daniels	Constructing Hope
Nina Jones	IBR Civil Rights Compliance Officer
Alicia Sojourner	City of Vancouver
IBR Staff and Consultants	
Greg Johnson	Program Administrator
Dr. Roberta Hunte	Facilitator
Brent Hamlin	Tech Support
Chris Lepe	Equity Panel
Jake Warr	Equity Lead
Timo Isreb	Communications Intern
Fabiola Casas	Equity Associate
Tanya Adams	Equity Panel
Johnell Bell	Principal Equity Officer
Alex Prentiss	Cross-Discipline Coordination Lead

July 19th, 2021



Attendees	Affiliation
Ryan LeProwse	Transportation Planning Manager