

EXECUTIVE STEERING GROUP (ESG)

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING SUMMARY

Date and Time: March 6, 2025, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Location: Zoom and YouTube Livestream

Executive Steering Group Members in Attendance: Commissioner Jack Burkman (Port of Vancouver), Chief Executive Officer Leann Caver (C-Tran), Councilor Olivia Clark (City of Portland), Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle (City of Vancouver), Secretary Julie Meredith (Washington State Department Of Transportation), President Lynn Peterson (Oregon Metro), Dale Robbins (Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council, alternate for Executive Director Matt Ransom), Executive Director Curtis Robinhold (Port of Portland), Director Kris Strickler (Oregon Department of Transportation), Lynn Valenter (CAG Co-Chair) and JC Vanatta (TriMet)

IBR Program Staff in Attendance: Frank Green (Assistant Program Administrator), Greg Johnson (Program Administrator), Anita Kea'lani Yap (Facilitator), Ray Mabey (Assistant Program Administrator), Chris Regan (Environmental Manager) and Paige Schlupp (Assistant Program Administrator)

WELCOME, INTRODUCTION, PROPOSED AGENDA AND UPDATES

Facilitator Anita Kea'lani Yap opened the meeting by addressing standard protocols. She shared public comment instructions and acknowledged comments received and distributed prior to the meeting to ESG members. She also went over the meeting ground rules and reviewed the agenda.

Kea'lani Yap introduced two new members of the ESG, Secretary Julie Meredith representing WSDOT and Councilor Olivia Clark representing City of Portland. The other ESG members introduced themselves and shared relevant updates since the last ESG meeting.

PROGRAM UPDATES

IBR Program Administrator Greg Johnson provided an update on the Program's work and progress since the last ESG meeting. Johnson shared that the Program has completed the Draft SEIS process and is reaching the end of the environmental phase as the Program moves toward releasing the Final SEIS later this year followed by an Amended Record of Decision (ROD). Johnson also shared the Program is working on permitting, design and preparing pre-construction activities.

FUNDING

IBR Assistant Program Administrator Frank Green gave an update on Program funding. Green shared that the Program has signed grant agreements for our two large federal grant awards (BIP and Mega). Additionally, Green shared that a \$30 million USDOT Reconnecting Communities Pilot Grant was recently awarded to the

City of Vancouver for the Community Connector, which is part of the IBR Program investments. Finally, Green shared that the Program is working with the Washington State Legislature on a bill allowing the Program to bond against tolling in the future.

BRIDGE PERMIT UPDATE

IBR Assistant Program Administrator Ray Mabey provided an update on the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) bridge permit. Mabey reminded ESG members that the Program submitted an initial Navigation Impact Report in 2022. After USCG held a public comment period on the report, USCG determined the proposed fixed span bridge height did not meet the reasonable needs of river users. Mabey shared the Program has met regularly with USCG and the impacted river users to come to address impacts. The Program will submit an updated Navigation Impact Report, followed by another public comment period. Mabey shared the Program anticipates no impacted river users will be identified and the Program will submit a bridge permit application in late 2025 or early 2026 for a fixed height bridge. Councilor Clark asked Mabey to clarify the height of the existing bridge and the proposed height of the replacement bridge. Mabey shared the current bridge offers 178 feet of vertical clearance, and the Program is hoping to submit a bridge permit for a fixed span bridge with 116 feet of vertical clearance.

DRAFT SEIS COMMENT OVERVIEW

IBR Environmental Manager Chris Regan provided an overview of the Draft SEIS comments received throughout the 60-day public comment period. Regan shared an overview of Program engagement and communication tools to raise awareness of the Draft SEIS public comment period, provide opportunities for the community to ask questions and how to provide public comment.

Regan shared that the Program received around 3,600 submissions during the Draft SEIS public comment period. He explained that there can be multiple comments within a submission so, in total, the Program received more than 10,000 comments.

Regan shared a graph showing the different categories of public comments received on the Draft SEIS. They covered a variety of categories, with the four most common ones being: transportation, design, tolling, alternatives and bridge components. Regan shared that the Program is currently working to process those comments and understand how they might refine design or technical analysis. Additionally, Regan shared that all comments will be included and responded to in the Final SEIS with acknowledgement of any updates the Program made to design or technical analysis in response to the comments received. The Program is also working to post all raw comments on the website. Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle asked Regan if there is a specific category for comments on Pearson Airfield and Regan clarified there is an aviation category that includes about fifteen comments surrounding both Pearson Airfield and Portland International Airport.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sarah Iannarone commented on the importance of the multimodal aspects of the Program and public transportation on the replacement bridge.

Chris Smith commented on the importance of the multimodal aspects of the Program and public transportation on the replacement bridge.

Bob Ortblad commented on cost estimate and bridge design.

NEXT STEPS

IBR Program Administrator Greg Johnson shared next steps, including: the Final SEIS is anticipated in late 2025, followed by an Amended ROD and that the Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee continues to meet. Upcoming work will include discussion on different aspects of Program design and the Program anticipates initiating the procurement process after receiving an Amended ROD.

CLOSING

Kea'lani Yap closed the meeting by extending another welcome to new members of the ESG and reminding the ESG that more meetings will be scheduled in the future.

The meeting adjourned at 10:46 and has 140 public views.

A recording of the meeting is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04NKK6w4uus>

The meeting materials are available here: <https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/esg-march-6-2025-meeting/>