

EXECUTIVE STEERING GROUP (ESG)

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING SUMMARY

Date and Time: September 25, 2025, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Location: Zoom and YouTube Livestream

Executive Steering Group Members in Attendance: Chief Executive Officer Leann Caver (C-TRAN), Councilor Olivia Clark (City of Portland), Sam Desue (TriMet), Dan Eisenbeis (Port of Portland), Julianna Marler (Port of Vancouver), Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle (City of Vancouver), Ron Pate (WSDOT), Lynn Peterson (METRO), Executive Director Matt Ransom (Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council), Director Kris Strickler (ODOT), Lynn Valenter (CAG Co-Chair)

IBR Program Staff in Attendance: Frank Green (Assistant Program Administrator), Greg Johnson (Program Administrator), Anita Kea'lani Yap (Facilitator), Casey Liles (Program Delivery Manager), Ray Mabey (Assistant Program Administrator) Steve Witter (Deputy 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. She also went over the meeting ground rules and reviewed the agenda.

ESG members introduced themselves and gave relevant updates from their respective organizations.

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 is trending towards the end of the environmental process and is currently working with federal partners towards a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) in early 2026, followed shortly by an amended Record of Decision (ROD) which will allow the Program to move into construction. Johnson shared that the Program is continuing to work on permitting, design, procurement and community engagement. Johnson gave a brief overview of funding, Program schedule and the process to decide the bridge configuration of the replacement bridge.

FUNDING & UPCOMING WORK UPDATES

IBR Assistant Program Administrator Ray Mabey gave an update on Program funding. Mabey provided an overview of committed Program funding and described the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Starts Capital Investment Grant (CIG) process. Mabey noted that the Program is in the process of updating its cost estimate and is tracking cost increases in transportation projects across the county.

IBR Assistant Program Administrator Frank Green described the cost estimating process. The updated cost estimate will be adjusted for expected risks. The updated cost estimate will be in the year of expenditure. The cost estimate will include estimates for a fixed span and a moveable span bridge configuration.

Deputy Assistant Program Administrator Steve Witter provided an overview of the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) Program and that the Program is seeking approximately \$1 billion from the grant program. Witter explained the CIG rating criteria and the required rating that the IBR Program must achieve to receive the grant. The FTA requires the Program to use the Simplified Trips on Program (STOPS) ridership model in the CIG process which is different than the models used for the SEIS. Operations and maintenance funding will be used to pay for operations and maintenance of a variety of transit elements and program partners are still working together to determine appropriate funding sources. The operations and maintenance costs of transit will continue to be updated to reflect the best available information.

Dan Eisenbeis of the Port of Portland asked what type of engagement the ESG can expect in the development of an updated funding plan. Johnson shared that the Program intends to ensure that the ESG partners are up to speed on the process and preliminary findings as it approaches the release of a new estimate. Green clarified that the ESG and their agency staff will be involved in a roll-out plan.

Matt Ransom of the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council asked Witter to clarify that the ridership model used in the CIG process is distinctively different than the model used in the SEIS process. Witter confirmed that they are two different models that yield two different results, looking at two different scenarios. The CIG process does not consider local transit services that are not consistent across the U.S.

RECENT ENGAGEMENT

Johnson gave an overview of the over 100 engagement and outreach activities the IBR Program has participated in so far in 2025. These engagements include partners, industry events and community events among others. Johnson provided an update on the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) Amendment to move the Program from planning into construction.

Delivery Manager Casey Liles gave an overview of recent architectural elements workshops held in July and August. The workshops helped inform the guidelines for design and construction procurement documents. The visual examples included showed a single-level fixed span bridge. Liles shared the feedback the Program heard on the design aesthetics of the corridor. Liles shared a few of the visualizations from the workshops which provided various perspectives of the proposed investments.

Portland City Councilor Olivia Clark asked about the grade of the walkway. Liles shared that all the grades in the Program would meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements and that the Program's desire is to make the grades as approachable as possible. The ADA requires no more than 5% for pedestrians and Liles shared that the team is designing all grades at 4.5% or lower.

Metro President Lynn Peterson asked if there has been any consideration of shortening the distance pedestrians are going. Liles reflected that there has been public input for these to be desirable to walkers and bikers, which requires striking a balance between distance and grade. Peterson then asked if a lift-span would shorten the overall height of the bridge. Liles shared that it would have to be flat and could shorten the bridge when not lifted. However, it still must clear the BNSF railway, so it does not lessen it significantly. Peterson also asked what the architectural elements and aesthetics were inspired by and if any of it was inspired specifically by elements of the Pacific Northwest. Liles shared that the designs were inspired by the expertise of the architects and these recent conversations are intended to influence future design iterations. Johnson provided more context around the use of information from the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) Program as well as the architectural firms involved. Peterson shared that she is looking forward to future conversations and understanding how these designs will relate to the Vancouver Waterfront and placemaking.

Matt Ransom thanked the team for committing resources and effort to the architectural element workshops. Ransom requested that when the bridge type decision is made to please accelerate within reason the design of the bridge. Ransom also requested to continue to commit to the intensity of work within the Vancouver Waterfront and Hayden Island design areas due to the location of this infrastructure in highly urban areas.

CAG Co-Chair Lynn Valenter reflected that the group had many opportunities to hear from the architects and see the various options for certain bridge elements, which gave her confidence that the aspirations of the ESG can be realized within the limitations of cost.

EFFORTS TO ADVANCE DELIVERY

Liles shared details around the Hayden Island Ground Improvement Study, which is anticipated to begin in Q3 of 2025. Liles also provided a recap of the September 8th construction industry webinar and shared that the Program will continue engagement with construction industry groups and professionals. Lastly, Liles shared a project map and the list of the current proposed 28 construction projects. This list shows the data associated with each project, including duration, estimated cost, proposed delivery method, contracting agency and earliest anticipated construction advertisement or RFQ. Liles shared greater detail around two of the first anticipated projects, the Columbia River Bridge and the Approaches. Liles clarified that fixed and moveable span configurations are both moving forward in the NEPA process; however, the presentation assumes a fixed span.

Dan Eisenbeis asked for clarification of the highlighted rows on the list of proposed construction projects and around projects with 2026 start dates. Liles clarified that the use of highlighting was to indicate that there is additional information regarding those projects and that they are some of the initial projects needed to get to construction. Projects listed with 2026 construction start times are in place to ensure the Program can build in sequence. Liles provided further clarification around Marine Drive A package, sharing that its purpose is to ensure that it can accommodate future light-rail without building the entire interchange.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Leah Jackson commented on the concern around the lack of direct connection to the library transit hub that is being created and the impact this has on multimodal users.

Zachary Lauritzen commented on the importance of a public transportation connection all the way up to Evergreen Boulevard, the importance of considering distance for individuals transferring between modes of transportation and the need for access to public transportation during construction.

NEXT STEPS

IBR Program Administrator Greg Johnson shared next steps, including the submission of the Navigation Impact Report, an updated cost estimate and financial plan update, a Final SEIS and amended ROD. Johnson also outlined procurement next steps, the Columbia River Bridge progressive design-build procurement, finalizing delivery methods for other contracts and updating project costs and schedule.

CLOSING

Kea'lani Yap closed the meeting by encouraging ESG members to follow up with the IBR team with any additional questions.

The meeting adjourned at 10:43 and currently has 108 public views on YouTube.

A recording of the meeting is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLS18EmPrNk&t=2s>

The meeting materials are available here: <https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/esg-september-25-2025-meeting/>