

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP (CWG) MEETING #2

Subject: Active Transportation Community Working Group Meeting #2 Summary

Dates and Times: November 23, 2021, 4:30 to 7:00 P.M.

Location: Zoom Webinar and YouTube Livestream

WELCOME REMARKS & INTRODUCTIONS

Anita Yap, facilitator for the Active Transportation Community Working Group (CWG), welcomed everyone to the meeting and began by providing an overview of accessible participation options including closed captions and ASL interpretation. Anita led the team in an introductory exercise where each CWG participant introduced themselves and shared an object in their house that represents their relationship to active transportation and/or experience with the Interstate Bridge.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

Katie Mangle, IBR Active Transportation Co-Lead, began by discussing the program timeline between now and early 2022. The program will continue to refine design options to address changes since the previous planning effort, embed equity and climate considerations within the design options, finalize screening criteria to evaluate design options, and engage in a two-way dialogue with the community around design options. By early 2022, the program seeks to develop and reach consensus on the IBR multimodal design solution in collaboration with partners and stakeholders.

Katie summarized the active transportation concerns expressed by CWG participants during the last meeting including shared use path width, access and ramp grades, desire for direct and easy to navigate routes, placemaking opportunities and areas for people to enjoy, and attention to path surface materials and other design features like railings. She explained how all design options will include active transportation improvements such as ADA-compliant ramps and accessways, dedicated shared use paths, local street connections, wayfinding signage, and more. The IBR Active Transportation Framework takes a people-first design approach and considers equitable access for people without vehicles and non-motorized commuters.

Derek Abe, IBR Active Transportation Co-Lead, reviewed maps of existing active transportation facilities and proposed improvements within the program area. Improvements to Vancouver neighborhoods include a proposed/planned bike facility on Columbia Street and improved east/west active transportation connections. Downtown Vancouver improvements include a possible “Community Connector,” a bridge over I-5 south of Evergreen Blvd. for active transportation use only, plus shared use path ramp connections to the Columbia River Renaissance Trail and a shared use path on the Interstate Bridge over the Columbia River. It is likely that Main Street will be extended to the Vancouver waterfront and there will be a realignment of

Columbia Way to Columbia Street. Active transportation improvements will be made to those streets, alongside improvements to McLoughlin, Mill Plain Blvd., and Evergreen Blvd. crossings.

The program aims to provide a direct shared use path across the Interstate Bridge that requires minimal effort to access and a high level of comfort for all users. The most direct path would take approximately 20-25 minutes to travel across the Interstate Bridge via active transportation, not including time to access ramps. The group discussed river navigation during this portion of the presentation and if it's possible to shift navigation lanes closer to the center of the river. It was shared that This is most likely outside the scope of the IBR program.

Derek reviewed maps of Hayden Island and Marine Drive, noting existing active transportation facilities and proposed improvements including improved east/west connections on Hayden Island, a new arterial bridge over the North Portland Harbor, and shared use path connections to the 40 Mile Loop Trail and Delta Park. The program will prioritize direct, intuitive, and comfortable active transportation connections in this area.

The group took a 15-minute break.

PRELIMINARY DESIGN OPTIONS

Derek shared three design options under review for the river crossing:

- 2013 Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) option: Two separate bridges with a curved alignment. High capacity transit on lower level of bridge underneath southbound traffic. Shared use path on lower level of bridge underneath northbound traffic. Need to consider how the shared use path will connect with Hayden Island and Vancouver. Current considerations have shared use paths landing on the east side of the bridge, with a corkscrew ramp design for the Vancouver side.
- Straight alignment option: Similar to the 2013 LPA option but a straight alignment, rather than curved, which allows for easier constructability. Shared use path would land on the west side of I-5 on Hayden Island, and the east side of I-5 in Vancouver.
- Stacked alignment option: One bridge with southbound traffic stacked on top of northbound traffic. This option has a smaller footprint over the Columbia River compared to other options. Shared used path is on the lower level of the bridge alongside traffic and uncovered.

The two options for how the Interstate Bridge will connect to downtown Vancouver and the I-5 corridor:

- 2013 Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) option: Shared use path would land on east side of SR-14 interchange and parallel Columbia Way and Columbia Street, connecting to the Columbia Renaissance Trail.
- Option with stacked crossing: Similar to 2013 LPA, but shared use path is cantilevered.

The options for Hayden Island and Marine Drive interchanges:

- Full interchange option: Shared use path crosses I-5 twice if traveling from Hayden Island across the North Portland Harbor to Portland and then east towards the Bridgeton neighborhood.
- Partial interchange option: Shared use path similar to full interchange option, but path climbs up to meet Marine Drive intersection in order to cross the arterial bridge from Portland to Hayden Island. Path will connect to potential future park on Hayden Island.
- No interchange option: Shared use path runs along east arterial bridge, creating a more direct active transportation path between Portland and Hayden Island.

The group then discussed design options presented.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Working group participant: Need to make sure active transportation investments/facilities are linked together, not just dropped in because there is an opportunity.

- Katie: The IBR program will continue to work with program partners (including cities) to identify gaps and provide recommendations on how to create a cohesive active transportation network.

Working group participant: How high is the bridge going to be over the walkway along the river (on the Washington side)?

- Derek: No clear answer yet since bridge options are still being explored. Has to be high enough to clear over the railroad but low enough to meet FAA requirements. There are maximum grades for highway, transit, and active transportation that must be considered.

Working group participant: The current bridge/I-5 freeway goes under the railroad, why is it now planned to go over the railroad?

- Derek: Considering all the constraints the program is aware of, that is the best feasible option at this time.

Working group participant: Are there going to be elevators?

- Derek: That is something the team is looking into.

Working group participant: Has the program studied moving active transportation facilities to the railroad crossing instead of using the Interstate Bridge?

- Derek: No, we haven't explored that idea. Tradeoffs to consider include directness of path and local connection needs. Also need to consider structural integrity of the bridge.
- Katie: Connections to transit service is an important part of active transportation considerations.

Working group participant: Why have a stacked bridge? Doesn't that require the bridge to be higher to accommodate traffic?

- Derek: Trying to minimize the footprint as much as possible. Need to minimize impacts while maximizing modal options and open space/landscaping opportunities.

Working group participant: Is there a concern that the lower levels of the bridge might create an unhoused refuge?

Working group participant: Noise level and bird dropping are a concern with shared use path underneath traffic on the bridge.

- Katie: There are pros and cons for each design option. Coverage would provide refuge from weather but may be attractive for camping. The stacked alignment option leaves pedestrians/cyclists exposed to the elements.

Working group participant: Safety and noise are primary concerns. Having the shared use path next to traffic on the bridge, instead of isolated underneath the bridge, may increase perceived and real safety.

Working group participant: Interested in switchback design instead of corkscrew ramp on Vancouver side so people can take breaks. Also, elevators are often broken so redundancy is needed.

Working group participant: Need a large/broad corkscrew design with areas to pull off and rest. Would the bike path be noisier if it's underneath the bridge instead of beside it?

- Casey Liles: Noise tests were done during the CRC project and it was quieter underneath.

Working group participant: In my experience, it is quieter to travel under the bridge. Suggest you move the corkscrew ramp in Vancouver underneath the bridge deck to provide cover and allow for a larger footprint.

Working group participant: Bringing a shared use path across a freeway on/off ramp (on Hayden Island), makes the intersection less desirable to engage with.

Working group participant: Agree that redundancy is needed for elevators. Difficult to push up or travel down a steep grade – need flat rest areas at regular intervals.

Working group participant: Have trouble seeing public acceptance of limiting traffic to Hayden Island, particularly the no interchange option, as many people use it for tax free shopping.

Working group participant: Would prefer the Hayden Island/Marine Drive arterial bridge to be located on the east side of I-5 for active transportation.

Working group participant: Prefer the no interchange option for Hayden Island/Marine Drive from the active transportation perspective. It has the smallest footprint and incentivizes different types of use.

MEETING CONCLUSION

Anita shared the program timeline and next steps. There are currently no plans for the Active Transportation CWG to meet again, however the program may wish to reconvene the group for additional feedback at a later date. Anita shared additional ways to learn about design options and provide feedback including an online open house and design options survey.

Anita thanked the participants for their time and adjourned the meeting at 7:00 PM.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

Attendees	Role/Organization
Guthrie Straw	Oregon Environmental Council
Marlin Brinkley	Clark County Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee
Domenic Martinelli	City of Vancouver
Coral Egnew	TriMet
Taylor Eidt	C-TRAN
Mark Raggett	Portland Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Rachel Cameron	Killer Queen Cyclery
Barbara Fields	At-Large Community Participant
Marian Rhys	At-Large Community Participant
Michael Newton	At-Large Community Participant
Thomas R. Baltes	At-Large Community Participant

Facilitators and Presenters

Attendees	Role/Organization
Kenny Asher	At-Large Community Participant
Robin Richardson	At-Large Community Participant, CAG member
Anita Yap	Facilitator
Katie Mangle	IBR Active Transportation Co-Lead
Derek Abe	IBR Active Transportation Co-Lead
Casey Liles	IBR Design Manager

Additional Participants

Members of the public viewed the meeting via the YouTube livestream during the meeting.

MEETING RECORD AND MATERIALS

Meeting Recording

A recording of the meeting is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihU9Q69JrE4>

Meeting Materials

The meeting materials are available here: <https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/active-transportation-working-group-2/>