

# EXECUTIVE STEERING GROUP (ESG) MEETING

## HIGH-LEVEL MEETING SUMMARY

March 17, 2021, 1 PM - 3 PM

ESG Members in Attendance: Regional Administrator Carley Francis (alternate for Secretary Roger Millar), Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty (first hour), Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle, Chair Scott Hughes, President Lynn Peterson, Director of Engineering & Construction Steve Witter (Interim ESG member), CEO Shawn Donaghy, Chief Public Affairs Officer Kristen Leonard, CEO Julianna Marler, CAG Co-Chair Lynn Valenter, CAG Co-Chair Ed Washington, Director Chris Warner (second hour, alternate for Commissioner Hardesty)

Absent: Secretary Roger Millar, Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty (second hour)

### Welcome, Introductions, Proposed Agenda, and Updates

Deb Nudelman, Senior Facilitator, welcomed the group, reviewed meeting logistics and reminded attendees about the public comment opportunity later in the meeting.

Greg Johnson, IBR Program Administrator, thanked the group for their attendance. Greg shared that the March 17 ESG meeting will include a snapshot of what the IBR program team has put together on the Draft Purpose and Need Statement and Community Vision, Critical Objectives, and Values document. Greg informed the attendees that the documents will go through a series of iterations and take in feedback from the ESG, CAG, EAG, Community Engagement, as well as the Bi-State Legislative Committee.

Greg shared that the April ESG meeting will be rescheduled for April 29, 8:00-10:00am.

Greg addressed concerns that have been raised by the partner agencies about the IBR program moving too quickly. Greg assured the ESG members that he will assess risk to the program and ensure that no substantive conversation is ended prematurely. He assured the attendees that the program is working hard to collect feedback from all voices as they move the program forward in a reasonable way. Greg informed the group that the program has set up a consensus model where partners are free to place items on the table for discussion, and that participation is vital to the program.

Greg noted that the purpose of this meeting is to receive initial input from the ESG members on the Draft Purpose and Need Statement, and Community Vision, Critical Objectives, and Values document.

Deb Nudelman asked the ESG members to go once around the table to introduce themselves and provide any updates from around the region.

- Director Strickler (ODOT) shared his interest in hearing the ESG members feedback on the working draft language and thanked the team for their efforts.

- Carley Francis (WSDOT) shared that she is the Region Administrator for the WSDOT Southwest region sitting in for Secretary Millar while he is on vacation. She shared her appreciation for the time dedicated to the program.
- Commissioner Hardesty (City of Portland) informed the attendees that she will need to leave the meeting early at 2:00pm and that she had written comments to share if she is not able to respond before she leaves.
- Mayor McEnery-Ogle (City of Vancouver) informed the attendees that the Washington State House and Senate both put the IBR program as their number one priority infrastructure project, with over \$1 billion earmarked for the program.
- Board Chair Hughes (RTC) shared his appreciation for Mayor McEnery-Ogle's update and thanked the program team for their work.
- President Peterson (Metro) thanked the program team for their work.
- Steve Witter (TriMet) informed the group that he is the Executive Director of Engineering, Construction and Planning at TriMet and that he is the interim ESG representative while TriMet is selecting a new General Manager. Steve informed the group that a new GM is scheduled to be brought on sometime around July.
- Shawn Donaghy, (C-TRAN), shared his appreciation for the conversation today.
- Kristin Leonard (Port of Portland) thanked Administrator Johnson for presenting to the Port of Portland Commission on the IBR program.
- Julianna Marler (Port of Vancouver) reiterated Mayor McEnery-Ogle's comment and highlighted the Washington legislative delegation's support for the IBR program. She shared that she has been participating in federal delegation meetings which have included positive conversation around potential federal infrastructure funding that may benefit the IBR program.
- Lynn Valenter (CAG Co-Chair) shared her appreciation for Greg Johnson's opening remarks.
- Ed Washington (CAG Co-Chair) thanked the team.

Greg Johnson shared an additional update informing the attendees that the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC) has put forth an additional \$30 million in funding for the IBR program. Greg added that the May ESG meeting will be extended to run for a total of three hours as it is the meeting where the program team is hoping to finalize the Purpose and Need Statement, and Community Vision, Critical Objectives, and Values.

Deb Nudelman reviewed the proposed agenda topics and went over meeting ground rules.

## Information and Feedback: Draft Purpose and Need Statement and Community Vision, Critical Objectives, and Values

Greg Johnson began by reminding the ESG that the program team is in the input portion of the iterative process and that this draft document will go through a number of versions as it is revisited and refined by advisory group and regional partner feedback.

Chris Regan, IBR Environmental Manager, reminded the group of the previous planning efforts and the charge from the Bi-State Legislative Committee to revisit Purpose & Need and Community Vision & Values. Chris informed the ESG that the program team is soliciting input from all IBR stakeholders in order to refine the draft language. Chris shared the Draft Needs, Draft Critical Objectives and Draft Community Values. Chris shared feedback themes heard from the CAG and EAG.

Chris informed the ESG that Climate and Equity are important priorities that should be included in the environmental documents. Chris shared that the program has looked at how to incorporate Climate and Equity into Purpose and Need, as well as the possibility of including those elements as Critical Objectives and within the Vision and Values statement.

Chris shared specific language in the draft Purpose and Need Statement that addresses Climate and Equity, including language related to seismic vulnerability, traffic congestion, and public transit.

Chris further defined the concept of a Critical Objective, which must be met to deliver a successful program so includes a pass/fail. He shared that the program team has looked at two Critical Objectives: -equity and climate change - and provided an overview of the elements within each of these Critical Objectives.

Chris shared that the next steps include providing input to the Bi-State Legislative Committee, soliciting feedback from CAG and EAG, continuing conversations on substantive and technical issues, and bringing back a further refined work product at the April ESG meeting.

### Questions and Discussion

- President Peterson asked for clarity regarding the Critical Objectives and asked if they would be incorporated into the Purpose and Need.

Chris Regan shared that it is a piece that has been added to other programs nationwide. He shared that putting items in Purpose and Need can be difficult because of the 50 years of legal precedent and associated risk. He shared that the critical objectives are outside of Purpose and Need but are pass/fail, and that pieces such as strategies and possible solutions can be brought in where they cannot in Purpose and Need.

- Commissioner Hardesty shared her concern around the Climate Change Critical Objective not referencing more options and infrastructure for people to use a host of transportation options. She

shared that without those pieces, she does not think the program will be looking holistically at climate change. Commissioner Hardesty shared that limiting Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) is an essential piece to any climate change conversation. She said she hoped that the funding mechanisms, both short and long term, reflect that.

Greg Johnson shared that the commissioner's comment is exactly the type of input the team is looking for. Regarding limiting VMT, he shared that the program team is looking to provide viable alternatives for people who want to get out of their cars and that the team is continuing that discussion with federal partners.

- President Peterson requested that the agenda be altered slightly to allow for Commissioner Hardesty's comments on the Draft Purpose and Need Statement, and Community Vision, Critical Objectives, and Values language.

Greg Johnson welcomed Commissioner Hardesty to share her comments.

- Commissioner Hardesty thanked the program team and ESG members for allowing her the time to share. Commissioner Hardesty shared that she is continuing to evaluate Portland's involvement and the extent to which the city can be supportive of the IBR program. Commissioner Hardesty informed the group that she had a couple of concerns to date.

She shared that she is concerned about community engagement and cited her belief that Purpose and Need is central to the creation of alternative solutions for the program. She shared the importance of the CAG and EAG fully understanding Purpose and Need and the critical nature of engaging the groups. She reminded the attendees that people naturally look to potential solutions and noted the importance of communicating the direct link between Purpose and Need and the program alternatives. She shared that the city's goal is to avoid the purpose of the EAG shifting to filter and prioritize the needs and values from the CRC project, but instead be used to provide thoughtful input around core needs. She shared the importance of engaging the right people and asking the right questions as the program develops its definition of equity.

Commissioner Hardesty shared that her second concern is about climate and equity. She shared that climate and equity are two of the urgent needs of our time and that they need to be centered in Purpose and Need. She shared her understanding of the schedule, but reiterated her statement that the current draft Purpose and Need does not reflect the partner feedback, nor does it reflect a consensus document. Commissioner Hardesty informed the group that if the working draft Purpose and Need language is shared with the Bi-State Legislative Committee, it should be shared as the "project team's working draft".

Commissioner Hardesty shared her third concern related to Purpose and Need framing. She shared that she recognizes that the needs identified in the CRC framework have not been solved, but that relying on that framework does not serve us well today. She shared that she is confident that the bridge can be replaced to provide for efficient movement of people and goods, as well as to address

systemic resilience. She shared that within this context, the program team and stakeholders can consider holistic solutions to serve person trips and goods movement instead of solving for each travel mode in isolation. She shared that the project purpose, by definition, is to concisely identify what we are intending to accomplish and be broad enough to ensure multiple solutions can be considered. She shared her belief that the program should be setting up to consider a full range of options and thinking about how to provide for the efficient movement of people and goods today and into the future. She requested that the program team fully consider her reframing and undertake a process that results in a product with CAG, EAG and ESG consensus prior to talking to the Bi-State Legislative Committee. She shared her belief that any updates to the Bi-State Legislative Committee must contain information regarding unresolved topics, as well as any forthcoming changes to the document.

Greg Johnson shared that the IBR program is aware of these concerns and there are things yet to be done to address a lot of the concerns. Greg informed the attendees that \$200 million was spent on the CRC project which received a Record of Decision (ROD) that needs to be addressed. He reminded the group that the framework for the IBR program is not the same as CRC, but that there are required questions the program team needs to respond to. He shared that the program team is not done, but that he believes the team will be able to respond to Commissioner Hardesty's requests.

- Commissioner Hardesty shared that the documents the IBR program has presented do not reflect the current racial reckoning and climate emergency. She thanked the program team for their time.

*Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty left the ESG meeting and Director Chris Warner took her seat as the City of Portland's Alternate ESG member.*

## Information and Feedback: Community Engagement

Deb Nudelman invited Lisa Keohokalole Schauer to present a report out on initial input received from Community Engagement activities.

Lisa shared the engagement and outreach methods the program used to solicit community perspectives around the IBR program. Lisa informed the attendees that the interactive survey had a total of 9,155 total survey participants and 14,470 total comments. Lisa shared that the survey results are not a statistically significant look at the community's perspective. Lisa shared a breakdown of survey participants, summarizing their responses around race, age, and income. She shared transportation problems respondents ranked as most prevalent. Lisa shared that the survey asked the community members to identify their value priorities as well as the problems they experience around the I-5 bridge. She summarized key feedback heard at the two listening sessions with communities of concern held on March 11 as well as two youth listening sessions on March 15. Lisa provided a summary of preliminary findings, citing that the program will produce a full report by mid-April. Lisa then shared next steps, informing the attendees that the IBR program team will continue to review survey responses and produce the Community Engagement Report as well as continue community

outreach efforts. She informed the ESG that discussion of design options will be key topics for community engagement activities during the summer of 2021.

## Information and Feedback: Equity Advisory Group (EAG)

Johnell Bell, IBR Chief Equity Officer, shared an update on the EAG. Johnell informed the ESG that the EAG has begun to review a draft Equity Definition and provide initial feedback. He shared that the EAG has also reviewed initial equity-focused language in the first draft Purpose and Need as well as the Equity Critical Objective. He then shared a graphic highlighting some of the key perspectives at the EAG meeting. Johnell shared next steps for the EAG, informing the ESG that the group will be focusing on refining and adopting the IBR definition of equity as well as developing the IBR Equity Framework. He closed by sharing that the EAG will be discussing potential metrics and screening criteria to uphold the established definition of equity.

## Information and Feedback: Community Advisory Group (CAG)

Lynn Valenter shared that the CAG has been working to understand Purpose and Need and that the group is beginning to work together well. She summarized key conversations held during the CAG meeting on February 24. Ed Washington provided a summary of the ranked priority values identified at the March 10 CAG breakout sessions. Ed then shared a brief overview of key conversations held during the March 10 CAG meeting. He closed by providing a summary of next steps, sharing that the CAG will be focusing on reviewing the CAG charter as well as the Draft Purpose and Need Statement, and Community Vision, Critical Objectives, and Values document.

## Input and Feedback: Draft Purpose and Need Statement and Community Vision, Critical Objectives, and Values

Greg Johnson invited the ESG members to provide their feedback on the snapshot of the Draft Purpose and Need Statement, and Community Vision, Critical Objectives, and Values document.

Deb Nudelman asked the ESG members to go once around the virtual table and share their initial thoughts and feedback.

- Lynn Peterson thanked the IBR team for all their work. She shared that the program is getting at the heart of the lived experience as well as learned experience. She shared her appreciation for the program's focus on the lived experience of the community as well as the community's needs. President Peterson shared her concern that there has not been enough time for the partner's internal review cycles on the draft document. She informed the attendees that Metro will do its best to fit within the IBR program's timeline but requested that the program be more understanding of the process for building consensus at the local level. President Peterson shared that Metro would work to brief their council, but in the midst of the pandemic, scheduling has proven difficult. President Peterson shared that she has two comments on Purpose and Need. She informed the group that it appears to her that the program is beginning to slip into the old way of doing things and pitting values

against values and modes against modes. She shared her alignment with Commissioner Hardesty's framing, explaining that the focus should be about the efficient movement of people and goods on both sides of the river as opposed to modes. She shared that equity and climate are important enough that the program should strive to put them in Purpose and Need while still managing risk, before looking at other options, such as Critical Objectives.

Greg Johnson shared that the IBR program team is committed to including equity and climate in Purpose and Need as robustly as possible. He added that equity and climate change language in Critical Objectives is in addition to whatever can be put in Purpose and Need.

- Anne McEnery-Ogle informed the group that the program has the existing Record of Decision (ROD) that allows for a Supplemental EIS process. She shared that the reasons for replacing the bridge have not changed, but the values of the region and approach to the project has, particularly with climate and equity. She shared that the need for the bridge replacement has increased and that the ESG should ask staff to continue to work on refining the draft language.
- Kristen Leonard asked Johnell Bell to respond to the measurable outcomes and metrics for equity and their timing with regard to what will need to be included in the equity Critical Objective. Kristen Leonard thanked the IBR team for their work in providing the draft document. She recognized the need for momentum, but emphasized the importance of allowing the community to provide input and express comfort with how equity and climate are included in the language.

Johnell Bell shared that the EAG will be working on strengthening and refining the Critical Objectives draft language.

- Julianna Marler expressed that it was very helpful to hear the CAG and EAG feedback to understand the many perspectives on the program. She shared that it would be helpful to learn more about the federal process to ensure we don't impact the program's ability to secure federal funding. She noted that there are certain requirements to follow as the program moves through the process and that it is important that we don't impact the timeline and ability to secure that funding by going down a path on an issue that cannot be modified within the legal requirements.

Greg Johnson shared that the program team will be providing a written response to Julianna Marler's request.

- Scott Hughes shared his agreement with Kristen Leonard about the community wanting input. Scott Hughes shared that his constituents just want the bridge to be completed quickly. He cited the economic, equity and environmental benefits of a new bridge. He shared that the community of Ridgefield has grown, and the economics have changed. He asked Johnell to comment on the changes that have taken place in Portland and cited the shifting landscape for equity in the region.

Johnell Bell shared that the IBR team's analysis shows that the region is growing and diversifying as well as dispersing. He shared that the dispersing is a result of income inequality and gentrification.



Johnell shared that communities of concern are moving to East Multnomah County, West Washington County and Clark County. He shared his agreement with Board Chair Hughes and cited the critical nature of developing performance measures to ensure that the program is advancing equity outcomes.

- Shawn Donaghy thanked the team for their work on Purpose and Need, citing specific appreciation for the program’s work on equity. He shared that while he appreciates the idea of providing people transportation choices, he disagrees with the comment that the Purpose and Need should be a driving factor for reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) on the bridge. He shared that this perspective does not account for electric vehicles and zero emission vehicles and the environmental effect of those increasingly prevalent emerging technologies. He shared that the idea of lowering VMT is not the right way to approach the conversation, particularly with a growing community.
- Steve Witter shared his agreement that the program would benefit from taking extra time on the Purpose and Need portion of the program to ensure the program does not lose any of its important partners. Steve shared that the program does have a ROD that was a joint effort with FTA and FHWA. He shared that keeping the FTA in the mix while preparing NEPA documents is important. He shared that TriMet has been able to weave equity and climate into Purpose and Need for the Southwest Corridor project.

Greg Johnson shared that FTA has been a part of the process and emphasized their importance to the program.

- Chris Warner shared that the FHWA is significantly different than it has been in the past and the program should be consistent with the new direction. One of PBOT’s former staffers is now the civil rights director for the USDOT.
- Ed Washington shared his appreciation for the program team and the ESG members and their efforts to work together.
- Lynn Valenter thanked the ESG members for their level of insight. Lynn shared that she thinks the program team is proposing an elegant solution to a complex problem in their navigation of building on the existing work from the previous ROD, and new additions to Purpose and Need language. Lynn echoed the urgency of needing to get the right bridge built and that we have a responsibility to be mindful of taxpayer dollars and the cost of moving too slow.
- President Peterson shared the need for the ESG members to engage in more discourse. She informed the group that there is an important balance between moving quickly and moving together. Last time there was \$750 million lost because there was not consensus. She addressed the earlier comment regarding Vehicle Miles Traveled, saying it is a critical measure for climate change. She shared that the Portland region has been focusing work on reducing the distance community members need to travel



to meet their needs. She highlighted that it is not simply an issue of the mode, but instead an issue of land use and transportation planning.

- Director Strickler thanked the IBR team for their work on community engagement and equity work. He shared that the program needs to continue to ensure they create an environment where all voices stay around the table and that they engage in a way that allows that to continue. Director Strickler expressed appreciation for Lynn Valenter and Ed Washington.
- Carley Francis shared her appreciation for the partner and program staff's time. She echoed the appreciation of Director Strickler for Ed Washington and Lynn Valenter's time since their presence on the ESG ensures community voices are present along with partner agency leadership.

## Opportunity for Public Input

Deb Nudelman opened the floor to public comment. Three people shared comments.

- Robert Liberty introduced himself as a private citizen. They shared the importance of the Purpose and Need to the IBR program. They shared that the program needs to provide equitable benefits to users. They shared that congestion pricing should be the analytic foundation for the IBR program and cited the need of the program to depart from class-based zoning and old seismic assessments. Robert shared that the program does not allow for meaningful public input.
- Dave Rowe introduced himself as a Battle Ground resident who commutes to Lake Oswego. They shared their opinion that commuter rail should be considered as a transportation alternative. They shared that the Burlington Northern bridge should be considered for alterations as a part of the IBR program strategy.
- John Leigh shared that they are a citizen from Camas. They stated that the community survey reflected the community's request for improved travel time. John Leigh reiterated their statement that people's time should be the priority of the program.

## Confirm Upcoming Meeting Topics, Next Steps, and Summary

Deb Nudelman shared that the next ESG meeting will be held on April 29, 2021. She informed the group that the meeting will include updates and input from the Bi-State Legislative Committee, a report out on CAG and EAG activities, an opportunity to further refine the Draft Purpose and Need Statement, and Community Vision, Critical Objectives, and Values language, and an opportunity to hear initial feedback from partner agency commissions, boards, and councils.

Greg Johnson thanked the ESG members for their input and shared that the program is not at the end, but the middle of the Purpose and Need process. He invited the ESG members to reach out with any additional comments.

Deb Nudelman thanked the attendees, and the meeting was adjourned.

### Executive Steering Group Members

Name and Title	Organization
Director Kris Strickler	Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)
Regional Administrator Carley Francis	Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty	City of Portland
Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle	City of Vancouver
Board Chair Scott Hughes	Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC)
Metro Council President Lynn Peterson	Metro
Engineering and Construction Director Steve Witter (Interim)	TriMet
CEO Shawn Donaghy	C-TRAN
Chief Public Affairs Officer Kristen Leonard	Port of Portland
CEO Julianna Marler	Port of Vancouver
Lynn Valenter	Community Advisory Group Co-Chair
Ed Washington	Community Advisory Group Co-Chair

### Staff

Name	Organization
Greg Johnson, Program Administrator	IBR program team

Johnell Bell, Chief Equity Officer, Community Advisory Group co-facilitator	IBR program team
Lisa Keohokalole Schauer, Strategic Communications Manager	IBR program team
Chris Regan, Environmental Manager	IBR program team
Deb Nudelman, Lead Facilitator	IBR program team

## Additional Participants

85 members of the public, partner agency staff, and the IBR team viewed the meeting via the Zoom webinar and the YouTube livestream during the meeting.

## Meeting Recording and Materials

A recording of the meeting and the meeting materials are available on the website:  
<https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/esg-march-17-meeting/>