

COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING #9

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING SUMMARY

Subject: Community Advisory Group Meeting #9 Summary

Date and Time: September 2, 2021 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom Webinar and YouTube Livestream

WELCOME & OUTCOMES

Ed Washington, CAG co-chair, welcomed the group and Lisa Keohokalole Schauer, CAG co-facilitator, reviewed the technical instructions for the meeting and the agenda.

CASE FOR IBR VIDEO LAUNCH

The CAG viewed the Case for IBR video, starring CAG member Andrew Hoan of the Portland Business Alliance. The video shares how the community, businesses and organizations can benefit from a new Interstate Bridge. Andrew states “This is the promise of successful investment in our community.”

PROGRAM AND ADVISORY GROUP UPDATES

Greg Johnson, Program Administrator, provided a brief update on program growth and frequently asked questions. The IBR Program is starting the analysis by collecting data to answer the following four key questions:

1. Are we fully replacing the North Portland Harbor Bridge?
2. Will there be an interchange on Hayden Island, or will it have a different access point?
3. How many lanes will there be across the bridge?
4. What type of high-capacity transit will be going across the bridge?

At the end of March 2022, we are taking this data to the Bi-State Legislature Committee. Greg reminded CAG members the IBR program is always open to making a presentation to their partners, members, organizations, and constituents to make sure their voices are heard.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

CAG Member: Thank you for opening the opportunity to have a presentation with community-based organizations. From an NAACP standpoint, we will probably take advantage of that.

IBR EQUITY FRAMEWORK

Dr. Roberta Hunte, Equity Advisory Group (EAG) Facilitator, shared that the EAG is working in parallel with the CAG. The EAG is working to develop the equity framework as a blueprint for how IBR can infuse values, planning, and consciousness that centers the needs of the most marginalized within our community. Additionally, low-income community members, people of color and people with disabilities are a priority. As the program focuses on the needs of the most impacted in the community, it is important to determine if those benefits apply to the whole community. EAG is also recommending screening criteria that will inform design options. Dr. Hunte reminded the CAG to consider how the program can infuse equity within design and transit options for our region.

Johnell Bell, CAG Co-Facilitator and program Principal Equity Officer, believes that an essential step of the IBR equity advancement strategy is to develop the Equity Framework, which will provide a shared understanding of what the program seeks to achieve. This Framework will address the Programs equity definition, equity objectives, measures of success and putting equity into action. The IBR Equity Toolkit will have an equity index, equity lens, best practices review and mitigation commitments.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

CAG Member: In the equity objectives and economic opportunity, IBR calls benefit for DBE firms, people of color and young people. The program should also include indigenous community members.

- Johnell: We will work with tribal members to ensure we are being mindful of the rich tribal history.

CAG Member: I want to clarify that “LEP” stands for limited English proficiency?

- Johnell: Yes.

CAG Member: The adopted equity framework from Multnomah county mainly focuses on racial inequity and I think ours should encompass more.

- Johnell: We follow the notion of intersectionality. Negative outcomes have been directly tied to race in the region. However, we include other important distinctions in our equity definition.

- Dr. Hunte: Race AND is a core piece of this work. If we do not put race on the table, it is often taken off the table.

CAG Member: Where does centering community and environmental justice fit into equity?

- Dr. Hunte: The program wants to make sure where people spend their time is supportive of their wellbeing. Environmental justice is surely included in equity. Language needs to be stronger in identifying the connection between equity and environmental justice.
- Greg: We recognize the intersectionality of climate and equity. Our commitment to equity is getting national press.

TRANSIT INTEGRATION PRESENTATION

Lisa provided an overview to the transit presentation. CAG facilitators often talk about what we are asking for and how as a program we can deliver this to you. Right now, engineers, planners and technical staff are digging into data to see what has changed and what we need to update from previous planning efforts.

Kelly Betteridge, from the IBR Transit Team, shared the IBR transit mode will be part of the overall multimodal design solution – selecting a transit mode will not be separate from the overall design process. The IBR program is working towards one multimodal design solution by early 2022. The CAG and EAG will review design elements this fall. An informational campaign to the community will launch October 2021 to inform and engage with community members. She explained that high-capacity transit and express buses are needed to serve forecasted transit markets. Limited public transportation operation connectivity and reliability is a specific need that still needs to be addressed. Previous planning project transit elements include five new light rail stations and three park and rides. Additional elements of the previous preferred alternatives include improvements to closely-spaced highway interchanges, light rail extension to Clark College and pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements.

BREAKOUT SESSION QUESTIONS

After a 20-minute-long breakout session, the four groups reported on the following:

- Group 1: How will federal and local funding impact transit modes? What is IBR considering in the transit analysis?
- Group 2: IBR needs to consider future ridership capacity. Technology will change over the years – how will that impact transit? How to communicate big picture transit options to the public?

- Group 3: Emphasized safety at the forefront of the project. Could the Portland metro area become more of a travel destination with increased transit? The more cars we can get off the bridge, the more freight capacity is freed up.
- Group 4: The most desirable transit outcome is one that moves the most amount of people in the most efficient manner.

COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP OVERVIEW

Lisa provided the CAG with a Community Working Group overview and thanked CAG members who participated in the groups.

The program will be meeting with four Community Working Groups that will provide feedback and recommendations on specific transportation issues for the program's consideration. The four Community Working Groups are:

- Downtown Vancouver
- Hayden Island/Marine Drive
- Active Transportation
- Multimodal Commuter

PUBLIC COMMENT

Commenter [1:50:59]: This is Dave Rowe. I am a commuter from Battle Ground to Lake Oswego. My comment is a low-profile I-5 drawbridge would be visibly better for Vancouver Waterfront businesses compared to the double-decker bridge that is currently under consideration. The Vancouver waterfront is number 13 in Fodor's travel website. I cannot imagine Vancouver would keep that rank if a tall, Portland-type bridge was built on the waterfront. A Lower profile I-5 bridge would be vastly more appealing. At this point, IBR transit solutions show light rail into downtown Vancouver. Light rail transit would be a good addition to the City of Vancouver, but future light rail integration would be costly to extend into the rest of Clark County. I asked exiting railroad owners if they have been included in the IBR study on July 15 and have not heard back. Vancouver/Portland rail intersection is the most congested on the West Coast. Regional passenger rail service is needed for crossing the Columbia River to reduce climate change.

Commenter [1:52:37]: Good afternoon, this is John Ley from Clark County. It appears from your slides, and maybe it was truly focused because the discussion was about transit, but you talked about how travel times were a concern but it appears it is only a concern for transit rather than the average citizen that’s going to and from work in Oregon and that should be the primary focus of the deliberations for this entire project. The PEMCO survey in 2018 showed that 94 percent of the people do prefer to use their cars. When it comes to train use, TriMet admitted earlier this year that they do not expect it to recover to pre-COVID levels for another six years. Number two, C-TRAN recently announced they are curtailing their cross river bus service because demand has dropped precipitously, and they do not see a recovery in 2022. Therefore, future transit should be a minimal consideration. Basically, here on the west coast our density is not one that affords reliable transit use. Thank you for your time and consideration.

ADJOURN

CAG Co-Chair, Lynn Valenter, thanked CAG members for their continued engagement and authentic perspectives as the program continues to move forward.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

CAG Members or Alternatives

Attendees	Organization
Whitney Mosback	Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Dena Horton	Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
Diana Nuñez	Oregon Environmental Council
Irina Phillips	At-Large Community Member
Jana Jarvis	OR Trucking Association
Jasmine Tolbert	Vancouver NAACP
Julie Doumbia	At-Large Community Member

Attendees	Organization
Kevin Perkey	Workforce SW WA
Marcus Mundy	Coalition for Communities of Color
Martha Wiley	WA Transit Representative
Michael A. Martin-Tellis	Vancouver Neighborhood Association
Michael Kelly	Human Services Council
Michelle Brewer	Columbia River Economic Development Council
Mikaela Williams	At-Large Community Member
Robin Richardson	At-Large Community Member
Ryan Webb	The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Sarah Hall	At-Large Community member
Sheri Call	WA Trucking Association
Andrew Hoan	Portland Business Alliance
Thomas W. Gentry	At-Large Community member
Tom Hickey	Bridgeton Neighborhood Association
Victor Cesar	Public Transit Representative, Oregon
Lynn Valenter	Co-Chair
Ed Washington	Co-Chair

Facilitators and Presenters

Attendees	Organization
Jason Hagen	IBR Program Staff
Greg Johnson	IBR Program Administrator
Johnell Bell	IBR CAG Co-Facilitator
Kelly Betteridge	IBR Program Staff, Transit
Lisa Keohokalole Schauer	IBR CAG Co-Facilitator

Additional Participants

37 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 RECORD AND MATERIALS

Meeting Recording

A recording of the meeting is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W3OvBA-ZLkM>

Meeting Materials

The meeting materials are available here:

<https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/cag-sept-2-2021-meeting/>