

# EXECUTIVE STEERING GROUP (ESG) MEETING

## HIGH-LEVEL MEETING SUMMARY

February 17, 2021, 1 PM - 3 PM

ESG Members in Attendance: Director Kris Strickler, Secretary Roger Millar, Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty, Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle, Chair Scott Hughes, President Lynn Peterson, Director of Engineering & Construction Steve Witter (Interim), CEO Shawn Donaghy, Chief Public Affairs Officer Kristen Leonard, Commissioner Jack Burkman (alternate for CEO Julianna Marler), CAG Co-Chair Lynn Valenter, CAG Co-Chair Ed Washington

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

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

Greg Johnson, IBR Program Administrator, thanked the group for their attendance. He welcomed Portland Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty to the ESG as the new representative for the City of Portland, replacing Mayor Ted Wheeler. He also shared his appreciation for TriMet CEO Doug Kelsey's time on the ESG, noting his upcoming retirement from TriMet in March.

Greg shared a few high-level updates informing the ESG that the Equity Advisory Group (EAG) and Community Advisory Group (CAG) are now fully engaged in the program. He informed the group of a series of recent meetings where he provided a program update to the Oregon congressional offices and shared that the IBR program plans to do another round with the Washington congressional offices soon as well. Greg shared that the program team recently presented to the Washington State Transportation Commission to provide an update on IBR program activities.

Deb asked the ESG members to provide any updates from their agencies and jurisdictions:

- Secretary Millar (WSDOT) thanked the program team and shared that WSDOT has been collaborating to address issues from winter weather. He shared that this should serve as a reminder to look at transportation resilience for all users. He shared the importance of involving the community in the IBR process and thanked the team for their hard work standing up the EAG and CAG.
- Director Strickler (ODOT) shared his thanks to the program team and his support for the IBR program. He shared the importance of centering equity in the IBR program and reflected that in the past equity has been described as a geographic term when it should consider people first.
- Commissioner Hardesty (City of Portland) introduced herself and shared her interest in ensuring that the IBR program moves in an equitable and fair direction.

- Mayor McEnery-Ogle (City of Vancouver) thanked the IBR team for their work.
- Board Chair Hughes (RTC) shared his thanks to the program team and approval of the team's progress.
- President Peterson (Metro) shared a conversation happening in Oregon where possible changes to legislative tolling language, which were considered to be technical, are now being considered policy changes. This discussion is now going to a committee to be discussed further. She shared that this conversation is happening to ensure that projects like these can move forward as envisioned in a transparent way.
- Steve Witter (TriMet) informed the group that he will be filling the TriMet seat until a new General Manager is selected. He thanked the TriMet customers for their patience during the weekend's winter weather.
- Shawn Donaghy, (C-TRAN), shared his appreciation for the program's expeditious progress. He thanked the C-TRAN riders and employees for their support over the weekend.
- Kristin Leonard (Port of Portland) thanked the program team for their work and welcomed Commissioner Hardesty and Steve Witter to the group.
- Jack Burkman (Port of Vancouver) thanked the IBR team for their work on the program, sharing appreciation for the outreach efforts that has been clearly balanced on both sides of the river.
- Lynn Valenter (CAG Co-Chair) welcomed the new members and thanked the executives and their staff.
- Ed Washington (CAG Co-Chair) welcomed the new members and shared that he is looking forward to presenting.

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

## Information: Update on Community Advisory Group and Equity Advisory Group

Lynn Valenter began by reporting out on the CAG orientation, sharing that the CAG and EAG have focused on onboarding the members to the program and establishing group norms. She shared that the orientation was centered around establishing a recognition of the historic and environmental context of the program as well as the commitment to equity. She shared brief updates from the 1/27 and 2/10 CAG meetings and informed the attendees that the group looks forward to rolling up their sleeves on Purpose & Need.

Ed Washington greeted the group and provided an update on the newly appointed CAG members representing the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Bridgeton Neighborhood Association, the Portland Business Alliance, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, and the Oregon and Washington Public Transit Representatives. Ed informed the group that a representative from the Native American Youth and Family Center will be

forthcoming. Ed shared an overview of the next steps for the CAG, noting the next major focus will be on Purpose & Need and Community Vision & Values.

Johnell Bell, IBR program Chief Equity Officer, reported out on EAG activities sharing that the group now consists of 24 members with 2 additional members pending. Johnell shared that the EAG has established guiding norms and values and has begun to define Equity for the IBR program. Johnell informed the group that the EAG will continue to focus on Purpose & Need and Community Vision & Values as well as the development of a definition for equity during upcoming meetings.

### **Discussion and Q&A**

Lynn Peterson requested information on any emerging trends during conversations in the EAG meetings. Johnell Bell shared that discourse around targeting communications towards the houseless community, intentionally including those without access to technology, and soliciting input from persons with disabilities were all themes during the EAG meetings. He added that as the program team starts to consider design options, it will be important to maintain opportunities for community members to weigh in. Johnell also stressed the importance of centering and paying homage to the indigenous communities.

Commissioner Hardesty requested information on the relationship between the CAG and EAG and requested that the program team continue to use the term Community Advisory Group as opposed to Citizen Oversight Group. Greg Johnson provided an overview of the roles of the groups and noted the intentional decision to refer to the group as a Community Advisory Group, not using the term citizen.

Lynn Peterson requested a summary table on reports from the advisory groups. She shared that it is important for the groups to know that their feedback is being heard and considered. She continued to share the importance of documenting the decision-making processes.

### **Information: Summary of Community Engagement Activities**

Kimberly Pincheira, IBR Communications and External Relations Manager, provided a summary of the priorities and goals for the IBR community engagement activities. She shared that the program centers equity, diversity, accessibility, transparency, and inclusion in communications and provided a list of the program's key community engagement goals.

Kimberly shared the IBR program's commitment to evaluation and accountability, informing the attendees that the community engagement approach was created using feedback from partners, elected officials, and the community and that the effectiveness of efforts will be regularly revisited and updated as needed.

Kimberly provided a brief look at a recent community opinion survey, which solicited opinions on the IBR program from about 900 voters in Clark, Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties. She shared that the feedback received serves as a starting point to gauge preliminary opinions and priorities related to the program but noted that the questions did not include specific options on design elements of bridge replacement alternatives. Kimberly shared feedback collected in the community opinion survey citing

significant community support for the bridge replacement as well as community priorities around traffic congestion reduction, seismic readiness, safety, and equity. Kimberly shared feedback on tolling as a means of funding transportation improvements.

Kimberly shared details on upcoming IBR outreach and engagement efforts, which include a wide variety of virtual, online, print and community-based outreach. She announced the official start to an online open house running from 2/16 – 3/1, with the goals of providing program context, soliciting input, and seeking participation in the interactive community survey. Kimberly highlighted four live, virtual community briefing events, including one in Spanish, which aim to provide an opportunity for members in the community to understand the program as well as provide feedback via live audience surveys. Kimberly provided details on print, digital, and radio advertising efforts running through 3/1 and highlighted the Community Based Organization outreach effort as well as the use of multicultural outreach liaisons.

### **Discussion and Q&A**

Commissioner Hardesty shared her concern for limiting questions around funding to tolling without including congestion pricing. Kimberly informed the group that these questions were intended to get early feedback and general attitudes, but more comprehensive conversations on funding options are certainly necessary as work moves forward. Kimberly thanked Commissioner Hardesty for her comment.

President Peterson thanked Commissioner Hardesty for her comment. She shared that there is a cost to the level of congestion at the bridge. She shared the need to have a full conversation on the range of ways to pay, including a deeper look at the costs and benefits and how to balance them.

Commissioner Burkman shared that tolling has been a controversial topic on the Washington side of the river and thanked the program team for asking the question.

Kimberly provided additional clarification that community opinion results shared were just a snapshot of the broader survey results and the full survey did embed additional details in the questions asked, which can be found on the website. Kimberly also agreed with the comments that there will certainly need to be a broader conversation about the suite of funding options.

Kristen Leonard requested clarification on the definition of workforce opportunities in the focus groups. Kimberly responded that the program team will follow up directly with Kirsten to provide an answer after the meeting.

### **Information and Feedback: Updating Purpose & Need and Establishing Community Vision & Values**

Chris Regan, IBR Environmental Manager, reviewed the Process for Updating Purpose & Need and Establishing Community Vision & Values. He then shared the previously identified problems in the Columbia River Crossing

Project (CRC) followed by a preliminary summary list of things that have changed in the region following feedback from the IBR team, ESG member staff, and other stakeholders.

Greg Johnson thanked the group for their input thus far and presented an overview of how updating the Purpose & Need and establishing Vision & Values will flow through the various advisory groups and community engagement. Greg highlighted the iterative nature of the process. He then presented three questions for the ESG to answer:

*What has changed in our region since previous planning efforts on the bridge?*

*Why are these changes important for our regional transportation system?*

*How can these changes inform the IBR Program?*

Deb Nudelman requested that the ESG members go once around the table and provide their responses.

- Commissioner Burkman requested information regarding the timeline of a draft of Purpose & Need going to the Bi-State Legislative Committee. Greg Johnson responded informing the commissioner that the draft will be presented at the end of March. He explained that the team is still negotiating to finalize a date for the meeting. Secretary Millar requested confirmation from Greg that the March and May Purpose & Need and Community Vision & Values milestones are aspirational. He shared the importance of delivering a quality product. Greg Johnson confirmed, sharing the program's commitment to both schedule and thoroughness of discussions. Secretary Millar added that the program needs to ensure that all opinions are listened to and stressed the flexible nature of the schedule but encouraged everyone to hold us to a good project while maintaining efficiency.
- President Peterson thanked the program team for opening the meeting up to this discussion. She shared that Metro has focused work on racial equity and climate change. She stressed the importance of moving forward those topics in Purpose & Need and not Vision & Values to ensure they move forward as a priority. She shared that both sides of the river place value on High-Capacity Transit and highlighted the departure from previous priorities. President Peterson informed the group of the Portland region having a policy of a maximum of three through lanes in each direction across the system. She shared the importance of the Purpose & Need reflecting the moving of people, and goods and services as opposed to vehicles.
- Scott Hughes shared that there is a lot more data on travel behavior, and the program team can understand behavior at a much deeper level as compared to the previous data. He noted that Clark County has grown by 27% since 2005, and with that congestion has grown. He cautioned that growth would continue, and demand would increase, so we need to ensure the bridge can accommodate needs 100 years into the future.
- Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty shared that we are in the middle of a racial justice reckoning. She shared that the City of Portland is committed to responding to climate change and reducing automobile trips as much as possible.

- Mayor McEnery-Ogle informed the group of the growing population of Vancouver as well as Clark County. She noted the increased congestion on the bridge during the morning and afternoon commute. She added that the community is more aware of the critical connection the I-5 bridge provides, specifically for emergency response, as well as its vulnerability to a seismic event. She emphasized the role the bridge plays in the regional economy and for access to jobs. Mayor McEnery-Ogle shared that Vancouver has pursued improvements to transit reliability with a new Bus Rapid Transit system, and bus on shoulder. But she identified the need for reliable transit options across the bridge. She shared that the region would need to do better on addressing equity and climate change.
- Shawn Donaghy shared that equity needs to be a focus of the program. He noted that bus on shoulder and bus rapid transit are new cost efficient advancements in the C-TRAN transit approach. He emphasized the need to efficiently move increased river and roadway freight in a way that does not harm members of the community.
- Steve Witter agreed with the previous statements. He added that the concept of affordability of housing and transportation is something that needs to be considered, along with access to employment. Steve shared that transportation solutions need to help the community but remain affordable for customers given that many have to travel long distances because of economic conditions.
- Kristen Leonard shared her support for previous comments including the impact growing congestion has had on freight, transit and vehicle travel, also citing the need for resiliency, equity, and access. Kristen shared one change from the previous program with the Port of Portland no longer having plans to build a marine terminal at West Hayden Island.
- Commissioner Burkman commented on the Purpose & Need language around freight. He shared that there is a need to include more specific language on freight to raise its visibility and focus given that freight mobility creates jobs and workforce opportunities. Commissioner Burkman shared statistics on job growth, increasing diversity, and economic growth in Clark County and other local infrastructure improvements supporting the economic growth. He reiterated the growing importance of freight as a major consideration for IBR.
- Lynn Valenter shared the importance of equity as well as focusing on the increasing income disparity in the region. She shared that increasing congestion, growing travel time uncertainty that impacts all bridge users, and the growing impact of greenhouse gas emissions demonstrates that we can't wait any longer. Lynn thanked Kristen for noting the absence of the West Hayden Island marine terminal.
- Director Strickler shared that the bridge was built to serve a different function and that the bridge's use has changed over the years. He shared that there is an increased need for balancing the economy, moving people, and providing access, and that the demand for these needs will only increase. Director Strickler shared that there is a significant change in the attention around diversity and equity, and how we talk about access with those that have been forgotten in the past. He informed the group that those changes are important and should be held first and foremost moving forward.

- Secretary Millar shared that the region around the I-5 bridge is a substantial, interdependent region in the United States, and that the interdependency on both sides of the river has only increased. He shared that access as opposed to mobility, as well as the access to opportunity a transportation system provides, need to be focuses moving forward. Secretary Millar emphasized the importance the bridge plays in regional trade, access to quality of life and communities, and access to opportunity. He shared the importance of attention to detail with respect to federal, state, and local processes given where funding will come from. He said that federal requirements shouldn't stand in the way of regional and local success.

Deb Nudelman thanked the ESG members for their thoughtful input.

## Opportunity for Public Input

Deb Nudelman opened the floor to public comment. One person shared a comment.

- Bob Ortblad shared that they suggest the IBR team look at an immersed tube tunnel. They shared a national example of the benefits of immersed tube tunnels as a bridge alternative.

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

Deb Nudelman shared that the next ESG meeting will be held on March 17, 2021. She informed the group that the meeting will include updates on CAG and EAG activities, a report out on interactive survey and community engagement activities, and a review of progress made on Purpose & Need and Community Vision & Values. Deb shared that the slides and meeting materials will be posted to the IBR program website.

Commissioner Hardesty shared that the current ESG meeting time will continue to conflict with the standing Portland City Council meeting. She inquired on the possibility of shifting the date or time of the ESG meeting.

Greg Johnson shared that finding the existing time was a significant effort, but that the program team would look at whether they could find a time that could meet all the ESG member's needs.

President Peterson shared her interest in discussing local policies around long-term workforce agreements.

Commissioner Hardesty requested that the program team share the presentation directly with the ESG members.

Greg Johnson thanked the ESG members for their input and shared the importance of getting to consensus.

## Executive Steering Group Members

Name and Title	Organization
Director Kris Strickler	Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)
Secretary Roger Millar	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
Commissioner Jack Burkman	Port of Vancouver
Lynn Valenter	Community Advisory Group Co-Chair
Ed Washington	Community Advisory Group Co-Chair

## Presenters

Name	Organization
Greg Johnson, Program Administrator	IBR program team

Lynn Valenter, Community Advisory Group Co-Chair	Community Advisory Group
Ed Washington	Community Advisory Group
Johnell Bell, Chief Equity Officer, Community Advisory Group co-facilitator	IBR program team
Kimberly Pincheira, Communications and External Relations Manager	IBR program team
Chris Regan, Environmental Manager	IBR program team
Deb Nudelman, Lead Facilitator	IBR program team

### Additional Participants

116 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-february-meeting/>