

EVENT SUMMARY: Sustainability and Climate Listening Session

The Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) program is committed to engaging in two-way conversations with the community. Listening sessions are a tool the program uses for targeted discussions with community members to gain insights on specific topics. The following is a high-level summary of feedback captured during breakout session conversations and live audience participation survey responses during the Sustainability and Climate Listening Session held on June 17, 2021.

21 community members attended the Sustainability and Climate Listening Session. 58% of participants shared they are actively engaged in sustainability efforts within their own home and/or community. Over 60% of participants selected design solutions that foster and increase active transportation, and the use of construction methods, means, and materials that minimize impacts to ecosystems as important considerations for the IBR program. Some participants shared a desire for a multimodal solution, ideas about the size of the program's footprint, and ideas for how to make the construction phase more sustainable. Overall, participants would like an IBR solution that embodies sustainability best practices and acts as example other transportation projects will aspire to emulate.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION QUESTION RESPONSES

1. Considering the three pillars of sustainability (social, environmental, and economic), what is most important to you when considering sustainability, as it relates to the Interstate Bridge Replacement program?

- Design solutions that foster and increase active transportation for public health (36%)
- Use construction methods, means, and materials options that minimize impacts to ecosystems (27%)
- Design solutions with sustainability in mind (e.g., seismic resiliency) (9%)
- Design solutions to minimize physical impacts (0%)
- Design solutions to minimize impacts from operations and maintenance (0%)

2. How would you describe your personal level of interest in climate and sustainability issues as it relates to the Interstate Bridge? (choose more than one option, if applicable)

- I am curious about these topics and wish to learn more (8%)
- I am actively engaged in sustainability efforts within my own home and/or community (58%)
- I belong to, work for, or otherwise represent a local, regional, or national organization focused on sustainability, climate, or the environment (50%)
- Other (8%)

3. Which of the three pillars of sustainability is most important to you as it relates to the Interstate Bridge Replacement program?

- Environmental (ecosystems, community resources, air quality) (29%)
- Economic (jobs, business impacts, lifecycle cost of infrastructure) (21%)
- Social (quality of life, public health, sense of community) (0%)
- All three are equally important (50%)

4. In your opinion, what is most important when considering climate as it relates to the Interstate Bridge Replacement program?

- Design choices that foster and increase climate-friendly transportation options (73%)
- Design with climate variability in mind (18%)
- Minimize climate impacts from operations and maintenance (9%)
- Construction methods, means, and materials that minimize climate impacts (0%)

5. Is this the first time you have engaged with the program?

- Yes (13%)
- No (88%)

6. How would you like to be engaged in the future?

- Host virtual or in-person events (43%)
- Use social media (43%)
- Provide access to team members (office hours) (29%)
- Seek input through surveys (57%)
- Other (0%)

7. Which of the following digital tools do you use to get program information?

- Program newsletter (100%)

- Facebook (0%)
- Instagram (0%)
- Twitter (0%)
- YouTube (0%)
- None of the above (0%)

BREAKOUT ROOM DISCUSSIONS

What local sustainability and/or climate goals, initiatives, or interests are you involved with? What is the greatest challenge for those initiatives?

- Working on a project in Lake Oswego (Willamette Shore Trolley), converting a trolley to battery power instead of diesel power. Greatest challenge is getting funding (grant funds). Lives in Battle Ground and most interested in battery-powered, inner-city passenger rail car transportation.
- We should design for future transportation needs, including the needs of electric vehicles. Will there be charging stations near bridge? Are you having conversations with transit partners on incorporating light rail?
- I am working on improving CO2 emissions and greenhouse gas emissions for utility companies as a consultant. I agree with the idea to utilize rail as means of transportation but need to engage railroad industry if we want to pursue that option.
- Previous program included freeway expansion. California Air Resources Board shows that adding road capacity increases traffic. Widening freeways to reduce congestion will increase pollution. Report shows that an earthquake would not be detrimental to the bridge and its structural integrity. Why does the project talk about tolling as financing, but not demand/congestion management (pricing)? Start with demand management and then scale the project, which will determine tolling.
- All needs (climate, economic, freight) are important. Hard to separate the issues. Need to provide for a whole range of objectives and needs for the future.
- San Francisco Bay Bridge replacement project after earthquake... has the program looked into their considerations and lessons learned?
- When choosing materials to construct the bridge, how will carbon footprint be considered?
- Interested in light rail as part of IBR solution. BART runs underneath the San Francisco Bay rather than across. Consider this as an option for IBR.

What is most important to you regarding replacing the Interstate Bridge as it relates to sustainability and climate considerations?

- Repurpose the bridge, don't replace the bridge. Build another bridge alongside the existing bridge and use the current bridge for pedestrian/bike/public transit.
- Most important to me: Do not use the bridge replacement as an excuse to expand the highway. We need less highway and more light rail and mass transit.
- Public health and public/worker safety is most important to me. Interested in pursuing an immersed tube tunnel option for these reasons.

How would you like to see sustainability measured on this program?

- Use the Greenroads Rating System or Envision sustainable infrastructure rating system (similar to LEED for buildings).
- Measure greenhouse gas from travel. Net effect of this program should be a reduction in greenhouse gas.

How do you think the Interstate Bridge and associated infrastructure can advance sustainability in this region?

- This program should be a poster child for sustainability in the region. We should be a shining light that can lead the way for other projects by embodying best practices.
- Test demand management and shrink number of lanes from 16 to six or eight lanes.
- There is an opportunity to emphasize transit and provide residents the option to travel without single-occupancy vehicles.
- We should recognize I-5 is a major freight corridor for the West Coast. It is important to build enough capacity for freight transportation.
- Be an example of sustainability for the region.
- Utilize inner-city, battery-powered passenger rail transportation. Also, build capacity for high-speed rail.

What opportunities for greenhouse gas reduction would you most like IBR to consider?

- Greater analysis of construction footprint.
- Demand management (congestion pricing). Priority tolling for freight and other important travel.

- Tunnel will use less energy for vehicle travel vs. a bridge over the long-term.

What transportation options are important when considering climate and sustainability?

- Changing land use patterns will reduce the need to drive. Widening the bridge will stunt the growth of downtown Vancouver.
- Mass transit will get more people across the bridge faster and take cars off the road, therefore reducing congestion.
- Improve mass transit and bike/pedestrian access.

What construction methods, means, and materials are important when considering climate and sustainability?

- Use low-carbon materials (including concrete).
- Construction is dangerous to workers.
- Using the existing rail line and/or building a new rail line is more cost effective than building a bridge.
- Need to prioritize local jobs and construction.

What's important to consider for operations and maintenance design solutions?

- Toxic tire/brake dust, runoff, and traffic noise will cause public health problems. An immersed tunnel would be a better solution.

How might our transportation system be impacted by an uncertain climate future?

- Consider the triple bottom line: people, planet and aesthetics. Prioritizing local jobs is important, especially for communities of color. Consider the planet by rebuilding ecology in the area, regenerate land, and incorporate greenery into the design. Aesthetics is also important so people can enjoy the bridge over the next 100 years.
- Less certainty about travel patterns in the future (due to COVID-19 pandemic).