

COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING #3

Subject: Community Advisory Group Meeting #3 Summary

Date and Time: February 24, 2021 4:00 to 6:00 P.M.

Location: Zoom Webinar and YouTube Livestream

WELCOME

CAG co-chair Lynn Valenter welcomed the group and introduced CAG co-facilitator Lisa Schauer-Keohokalole.

Lisa explained how to view closed captions, provided general webinar participation tips, and presented the meeting agenda. She reviewed the meeting outcomes and emphasized how the program team is trying to capture participation from all CAG members and the public.

CAG co-facilitator Johnell Bell presented the recommendation and decision development flow graphic that outlines how information flows through the program. He provided Equity Advisory Group (EAG) and Executive Steering Group (ESG) updates, what they will be working on in their upcoming meetings, and invited CAG members to attend if they are interested. Johnell introduced Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Environmental Manager Chris Regan and IBR Environmental Lead Angela Findley.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Chris reviewed the purpose and need statements and explained its importance in the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) process. He explained how the community vision and values will guide the program development and the composition of alternatives. He said that the purpose and need statement is used to screen the alternatives to ensure the program achieves the key objectives identified at the beginning of the project.

Question & Answer

CAG Member: Are the needs in any particular order?

- Response: No, needs are not ranked in environmental studies. If an element fails to meet one or more need, it is eliminated from the conversation.

CAG Member: Does that mean there is no weighted quality to the needs? Some seem like they might be more important than others.

- Response: Since the needs are reviewed as a pass/fail, all the needs must be met no matter what. There will be flexibility to define the evaluation criteria and performance measures for the purpose and need that are used to determine the threshold for what will pass/fail.

CAG Member: Were the needs put up as an example or are those the needs you think this committee needs to evaluate?

- Response: These were identified in previous planning efforts but are still needs that exist today. If any of them have been addressed in other ways, then we will take that into consideration. We are hoping this group can help us update them to reflect today's context.

CAG Member: Can you please define who "we" are?

- Response: "We" means the whole program including recommendations from the advisory groups.

PROBLEM STATEMENT SURVEY

Angela initiated a poll in which members voted on the needs that are most important to them. The survey results were displayed and showed that members prioritized needs in the following order:

1. Growing travel demand and congestion (39%)
2. Seismic vulnerability (29%)
3. Growing demand for more public transportation options (14%)
4. Impaired freight movement (7%)
5. Substandard bicycle and pedestrian facilities (7%)
6. Safety and vulnerability to incidents (4%)

As growing travel demand and congestion was the most important issue to address, Angela provided more information on congestion, accidents, diversion of traffic, environmental implications, and unreliability in the program area. CAG members provided the following questions and comments:

CAG Member: This is a great list. I have a question about bullet 3 regarding the crash rate – is that per vehicle or because there are just more cars during peak period? I ask because when cars are going really slow or not moving, the rate of accidents is very low.

- Response: I don't have information to directly answer your question. These are just some of the data that have been collected but, because of the numerous interchanges in a short distance along I-5, with a lot of people getting on and off the freeway there are a lot of weaving and merging challenges contributing to a lot of the crashes.

CAG Member: I wanted to point out the 5th bullet about vehicle idling and either take it away or correct it. It's more about vehicle miles traveled and the burning of fossil fuels that increases greenhouse gasses more so than just the congestion idling.

CAG Member: Are these numbers from today or is that from 2004 when the other project developed it's needs?

- Response: This is from traffic conditions in 2019.

CAG Member: The American Transportation Research Institute annually publishes their list of the 100 top bottlenecks in the nation and over the last few years, the I-5 Rose Quarter has been in the top 20 and the interstate bridge has moved into 23rd place. This is inconvenient and effects freight travel and reliability so fixing that is a top priority for the Oregon Trucking Association.

CAG Member: I was wondering if a bullet could be added about increased traffic tickets or data on ticketing trends in the area.

CAG Member: Consider a metric around social impacts and quality of life. When you get home at 7 - 7:30 pm, that has a big impact on family life. There is a lot of tension that builds when there is so much traffic and so many people trying to get places.

CAG Member: I want to echo a previous comment. Everything we are looking at really gets jammed up because of such bad traffic.

CAG Member: I think we should add a point for regional travel options to ease congestion including public transit and active transportation that will relieve some of the demand in the area.

CAG Member: If we were to replace that bridge with a 20-lane bridge, what would happen to traffic on I-205? Especially for trucks. And when we are talking about travel from Canada to Mexico, there will always be a bottleneck. Congestion seems to start at 6 am and go until about 8:30. It seems like we are setting concrete on a lot of things. I'm concerned that we are building a bridge for the 20th century instead of what it is going to be. The mass number of electric cars being produced is going to change the types of transportation. What was the transportation change when the ports closed because of the strikes? How much more freight was shifted to the roads? We need to be making decisions based on what it is going to be like in 2100 or 2035. I would like to know what the numbers are for the types of transportation that will be relied on in the future.

- Response: One of the things we are trying to do during the NEPA process is talk more about all the problems before we start identifying the multiple alternative solutions. These slides are meant to be problem statements and identify deficiencies before we get to solutions.

CAG Member: I do think the previous comment is valid, including electric cars and the changing vehicles. I would remind the committee that electric vehicles still need asphalt. Until we don't need asphalt, we have to think about capacity.

CAG Member: If we assume that the same number of vehicles fit into a lane and the population increases as projected in the next 20 years, we do need to consider more alternatives than just replacing the current infrastructure.

February 24, 2021

CAG Member: I would like to see how many miles of congestion are happening. Right now, it just backs up and up through Vancouver.

CAG Member: I appreciate the previous comment about electric vehicles and future-thinking. I think a practical way to start addressing that is to not only use historical data but also use forecasting data for population, traffic, and travel trends.

CAG Member: Has there been any examination of avoided or delayed economic activity because of all of these issues? I think it would be good to put a dollar number on the impact of all of this.

COMMUNITY VISION AND VALUES

Angela reviewed the values from prior planning efforts, which need to be revised to reflect today’s context. She then initiated a poll in which CAG members selected the top two values that are most important to them. Members prioritized values in the following order:

1. Mobility, reliability accessibility, congestion reduction and efficiency (59%)
2. Cost-effectiveness and financial resources (26%)
3. Bi-State cooperation (15%)
4. Equity (15%)
5. Modal choice (15%)
6. Quality of life (7%)
7. Climate change (4%)

The advisory group was then broken out into smaller breakout rooms to discuss the top two most important values. Groups talked about how the values could be improved, what else the team needs to consider, and if the value needed to be refocused. The notes from each group are summarized in the table below.

Value	Notes
Mobility, reliability, accessibility, congestion reduction and efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the difference between mobility, reliability, accessibility, congestion, reduction and efficiency AND modal options? Modal choice affects congestion reduction. • Modal choice refers more to transportation options, whereas mobility, accessibility, and reliability has to do with the freeway/corridor and network design. • Modal options should be a bullet point on mobility, reliability, accessibility page. • Modal choice is essential for future transportation. Mobility, reliability value should not call-out single-occupancy vehicles.

Value	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOV's - who has those vehicles? This is an equity issue. • We agree mobility, reliability, congestion is the problem, don't agree what the solution is. • Regional economy and freight mobility: I-5 is essential infrastructure. Need to acknowledge the need for movement of freight but can't let it dominate the conversation. Need to move people first. Where people need to go, livability. • Qualitative & quantitative metrics • Get off the worst bottlenecks list • We need to break this down further • Concerned that this is too broad, needs to be quantified • This takes care of most groups (passenger vehicles, freight, cyclists, etc.) • We need more of the work done prior so we can identify the meaning is • Use future thinking to refine what this means • Please define: "accessibility for all users", "increased capacity measures", "intra-corridor", "transportation system management"? • Increasing lanes could increase vehicle traffic, unless those lanes are bus-only, etc. How do you balance the values of congestion reduction with reduced reliance on SOVs? • Congestion pricing and tolls play into the question of accessibility • When looking at mobility and reliability, you need to look at how freight is moving. • This accurately captures what's important to me, except SAFELY addressing these issues. • How are we using these values moving forward? • Break it down everywhere there is a comma • These values are the basics - When we look back, did we accomplish the basics? • Accessibility includes alternative modes • We need to be clear and concise about what these "bility's" mean • We have to accommodate 100% of people who access the bridge • A lot of words - can we narrow? • Putting a sentence under each of these words that helps to digest • Accessed by broadest and diverse group of community members • How is it accessible to the largest percentage of users? • Are we making it accessible for people with mobility issues?

Value	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wish it was more efficient to use public transportation, reducing single occupancy vehicles • Equitable to all interested in accessing • Great that it's a broad term - too narrow we will end up with what we have now, which doesn't work for many people • Minimize single occupancy travel
<p>Cost-effectiveness and financial resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We look beyond the static cost of building it. Cost to maintain infrastructure over time. • Both states should share the OM costs long term • Equity questions: who we are hiring, contracting, taxing, maximize funding, tolling? Frame all of these equity lens • Cost effectiveness through the lens of equity is a higher priority. • We should have milestone percentages that a certain amount of work is done by DBE/COBID firms. • Is the EAG looking at the funding issues? • Consider where money will come from. Gas tax revenues will continue to decrease. Where will additional funding for maintenance come from? Operations and Maintenance cost long-term, need to be equitable. • Tolling is concerning and is an equity issue. • We spent a lot of money a decade ago and nothing came of it. We should be resourceful of that past work • Appreciate that "cost-effective" does NOT mean cheap • Who will be more effected between Clark County and Portland residents? • How is this measured? • How does the financial status of the project ensure safety of fish species in this corridor? How will this be measured? • THE alternative needs to be multi-pronged (ex: a bypass, tunnel, combination, etc.) - one solution to address multiple problems • Re-titled: Effective acquisition and use of financial resources • How does this impact carbon and greenhouse gasses? • What do we have in place for the "reliable funding plan"? • Is the program going to be completed in phases? What do those phases look like? • Large projects like this require funding from local, state, feds. It's for us to tell feds what we want to build and how to build it.

Value	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senator Murray has a request out for infrastructure funding. • Think about the schedule. How much have we increased the cost of the project by it being delayed (economic impacts, time, etc.)? • When talking about funding, need to use vocab that allows people to compare alternatives properly. • Remember what we are leaving for future generations • Need to look at costs over lifecycle • Congestion pricing used as a factor during planning process • Cost effectiveness is better when increasing local economic viability • Duplication effect when spending dollars locally • How do we benchmark cost effectiveness against other projects? • Once we are benchmarked, we can frame feasibility and understand nice-to-haves and must-haves. • We can't forget about maintenance • Keep money spent on bridge in the community via local contracting • Lifespan of product - needs to last

After the groups reported back, Chris explained that the program team is looking forward to incorporating the CAG members' ideas and feedback before the next meeting.

CAG Member: When do you need our feedback on the needs and values?

- Response: We are looking to reflect the feedback from you and the public at the next meeting, so as soon as you are able to process and provide it. By next Wednesday would be great, but as soon as possible will allow us to stick to our timeline.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- *John Lee [1:48:48]:* I am a Camas Washington Private Citizen. I think this committee would benefit from seeing specific numbers on traffic projections generated during the previous CRC effort. Based on the projections back then, by 2040 you would need 7 lanes in each direction across the Columbia river. I'm sure the projections have changed but the committee needs this information. Do you want to build a huge pipe to handle all that traffic or would you rather split it off just like the Interstate 5 traffic was the only transportation component until we built I-205? I think citizens would like multiple corridors built. Finally, I would like the committee to view and consider the Common-Sense Alternative Video that offers multiple ways across the river for bikes, pedestrians, and transit for half the price proposed in the previous CRC effort.

WRAP UP

Ed thanked the public for attending and CAG members for their participation in the breakout rooms. He reminded everyone that the level of effort for this program requires all of us to continue to have these discussions. There is an Online Open House that closes on March 1, 2021 and CAG meeting #4 and #5 are scheduled throughout March of 2021.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 5:58 pm.

MEETING PARTICIPANTS

CAG Members or Alternatives

Attendees	Organization
Ashton Simpson	Oregon Walks
Bill Iyall	Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Bill Prows	Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs
Dena Horton	Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
Diana Nuñez	Oregon Environmental Council
Dr. Karin Edwards	Clark College
Irina Phillips	Community member
Jana Jarvis	OR Trucking Association
Jasmine Tolbert	Vancouver NAACP
Javier Navarro	League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
Jeffrey Temple	I-205 Business Interest, Fred Meyer
Jimmy Rotharmel	Community member

Attendees	Organization
Kevin Perkey	Workforce SW WA
Marcus Mundy	Coalition for Communities of Color
Mark Riker	Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council
Martha Wiley	Public Transit Representative, Washington
Michael A. Martin-Tellis	Vancouver Neighborhood Association
Michael Kelly	Human Services Council
Michelle Brewer	CREDC
Mikaela Williams	Community member
Randali Desantos-Benromdhane	Community member
Robert Camarillo	Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council
Robin Richardson	Community member
Ryan Webb	The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Sam Kim	Community member
Sarah Hall	Community member
Sheri Call	WA Trucking Association
Andrew Hoan	Portland Business Alliance
Thomas W. Gentry	Community member
Tom Hickey	Bridgeton Neighborhood Association
Victor Cesar	Public Transit Representative, Oregon
Lynn Valenter	Co-Chair

Attendees	Organization
Ed Washington	Co-Chair

Facilitators and Presenters

Attendees	Organization
Greg Johnson	IBR Program Administrator
Chris Regan	IBR Environmental Manager
Angela Findley	IBR Environmental Manager
Johnell Bell	IBR CAG Co-Facilitator
Lisa Keohokalole Schauer	IBR CAG Co-Facilitator

Additional Participants

30 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=AyfSDjYMsDA&feature=emb_title

Meeting Materials

The meeting materials are available here:

<https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/cag-february-24-meeting/>