PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR IBR JOINT ADVISORY GROUP

Received between August 27, 2025 and December 16, 2025

Comment Received: 12/16/2025
From: Randy McCourt
Email Subject: Joint Advisory Group Meeting
Attachment Included: No

For the meeting tomorrow, is there an agenda? Thx

Take care and be safe
Randy

Comment Received: 8/27/2025
From: Randy McCourt
Email Subject: Joint CAG/EAG Public Comment
Attachment Included: Yes

Based upon the presentation today I wanted to comment on the Shared Use Path (SUP). On the Washington side it has ***far too much*** out of direction travel and dark (under freeway/structure) spaces. Its start and end should be directly connected to the waterfront and the trails to the north - not adding substantial out of direction travel to users the east-west user and disconnected substantially from the north-south user.. The function of the SUP will be lost or depressed with non-direct linkages. Integrating with the existing walk and cycle paths directly is essential to function. Things to be considered:

1. Have the SUP follow the northbound I-5 to eastbound SR 14 ramp (to the outer (east) edge) as an integrated structure to link to the existing Land Bridge and waterfront - more direct access for cyclists and walkers to trails and waterfront
2. Consider a functional, public, accessible, durable elevator (refer to Walkway over the Hudson in Poughkeepsie, NY). Is there consideration of a LRT station for the Vancouver Waterfront - which would double for vertical circulation? Consider a business owners association collaboration on the use/operation/maintenance of the elevator.
3. Utilize stairways to directly access walkers to the Vancouver Waterfront. Take advantage of the features for cultural representation/art in the stairway design. Include bicycle runnels (attached).
4. Evaluation of length of structure and benefit/cost vs elevator needs to be done - considering lost time and directness of path.

The length and dark nature of the SUP will render its future use comparable to existing lightly utilized bridge crossing.

Consider photo viewing points of interest - the parapet design will interfere with visibility if places are not created to make use of vistas that will be available for the river, mountains, landscape (leaf change) and cityscape. There could be "pull outs" or "notches" that create spaces for folks to pause - separated from the space for through users (walkers and cyclists). In the "notches" the fence type could be modified from security driven to security + view driven.

Note three things with the Walkway over the Hudson (below):
1. Direct path
2. Variable fence for security and viewing
3. Elevator

Abutments Discussion

- Please consider murals/art on any vertical surfaces that are graffiti-resistant
- Use flower/hosta/coleus (shade) planter bollards as a buffer row at the curb of the street separating it from the walk/bicycle spaces (partner with business association/city/state on maintenance).
- Consider horizontal elements of the bent/pier structure elements for cultural representation art, logos, messages.
- Considering the look of columns today on I-5 at the I-84 junction in Portland, what is being done to avoid urban graffiti outcome?

Questions

1. SUP: How do we increase active mobility usage?

A. Make access ***direct*** for all walkers, cyclists
B. Improve the walk/cyclist user connectedness of the I-5 ""new" SUP with the demand that exists in the current network - the Columbia River Waterfront Renaissance Trail,Vancouver Land Bridge, Burnt Bridge Creek Trail, Vancouver Downtown, Ft. Vancouver.
C. Assess the best and direct connections strategies for each system network element blending tools such as stairs, elevators and ramps together as a network rather than one ginormous, long, dark, out-of-direction structure and then claim you addressed active transportation. The existing ground system is accessible today (for the most part). Building upon that and not force fitting a single structural solution for the rest of the walkers/cyclists needs to be developed.

Complete Streets

Quick Bites

Bike Runnels – Improving Access for Cyclists and All Users at Stairways

Authors: Ransford McCourt; **ITE Complete Street Council** (Alex Rixey, Chair); **ITE Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee** (Claude Strayer, Chair); **Runnel Working Group Reviewers:** Beezy Bentzen, Peter Furth, Elijah Ferrari, Heath Maddox**,** Walter Okitsu

Bike runnels…what are they and why are they important? A runnel is a narrow channel in the ground that water flows through. A bike runnel is a narrow channel on the edge of a stairway that helps dismounted cyclists with bikes, e-bikes or e-scooters negotiate stairs. Cyclists place their wheels on the runnel and hold the handlebars and seat to push or hold their bicycles as they ascend or descend the stairs. Runnels are used in bike-friendly cities around the world and known by various names including bicycle stairway channels, wheel ramps, tracks, gutters, push ramps and/or access ramps. While bicyclists use of stairs is no replacement for ridable paths and routes, sometimes stairs provide a more direct route.

Figure 1. Bike runnel schematic.
Source: Walter Okitsu, *KOA, A Lochner Company*.

While a fairly simple concept, bike runnels can be deceptively complex and require careful attention in design to address intended users. This requires specific efforts to minimize adverse impacts to people using the stairways. Stair use by those with mobility limitations, older persons, or young children who depend upon access to the handrails, requires the stairway tread to be free of any possible tripping hazard. Trends in modern bike design include bulkier, longer bikes with larger tires which require wider runnels. Additionally, creating an extended skateboarding grinding edge is probably not the intention when looking to improve bicyclist access.

Here are a few tips[1] to consider when considering bicycle runnels:

- Material: can be formed in concrete or metallic channels (typically L-shaped)
- Position: should be on both sides under the hand railing, out of the walking area of the stairway
- Width: typically, 2-4 inches wide (.05 to .10 m) for runnel surface which may be flat or channeled. The outer edge can be typically less than 12 inches (0.3 m) from the wall but needs to be no more than 8 inches (0.2 m) from the outer face of the railing.

[1] A few design references include:
Design Manual for Bicycle Traffic (Utrecht, Netherlands: CROW, January 2017) https://www.crow.nl/publicaties/design-manual-for-bicycle-traffic and
Cycling England, *Wheeling Channels, Design Portfolio, Section B.10* (London, UK: Cycling Embassy of Great Britain, August 2008). https://www.cycling-embassy.org.uk/category/tags/cycling-england?page=1; and
Facilities Standards, Architecture, Passenger Stations, R3.2, Section 8.3 Bicycle Stair Channel, (Oakland, CA: Bay Area Rapid Transit, December 2020), 38-42. **BART website**

- Height (lip): typically, 1.5 to 2.5 inches height to control the wheel position (.04 to .06 m)
- Non-slip: gripping runnel surfaces are important for safety, particularly in the downhill direction (avoid smooth metal or polished granite or adhesive tape which can become a maintenance issue)
- Handrails[2]: wall-mounted to avoid pedal obstruction with posts, when possible
- Two-way traffic: consider stair width space for two-way/passing travel (this may lead to stair widths above 8 feet (2.5 m)
- Transitions: smooth transitions at top and bottom of stairs as well as at landings to avoid pedal catching on stairs (may require a slight hump)
- Landings: space for cyclists who pause on a landing should not impede pedestrian use of stairs; to prevent pedal strikes, runnels should continue to rise across landings
- Skateboard guards: anti-skateboard grinding clips/stoppers/devices may need to be considered on open edge of any open runnel
- Debris: consider maintenance requirements of leaf, debris, and trash removal, particularly if the runnel is added to existing stairs; to avoid accumulation issues, any added texture should focus on wheel rolling surface
- Signing/Marking: consider signing and markings (anti-slip) for runnels to call attention to them in setting where not all stairways are similarly outfitted.

Case Study Examples

Portland, Oregon

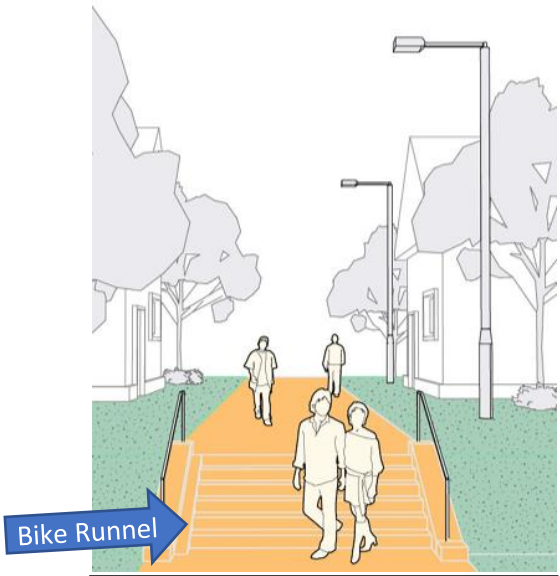


Figure 2. *Portland Pedestrian Design Guide*. *Source*: *Gena Gastaldi, Portland, OR: Portland Bureau of Transportation*.

Los Angeles, California

Figure 3. UCLA campus at Portola Plaza. *Source*: Rock Miller.

[2] Note the handrails by ADA are minimum 1.5 inches and maximum 4.5 inches from the wall.

Before

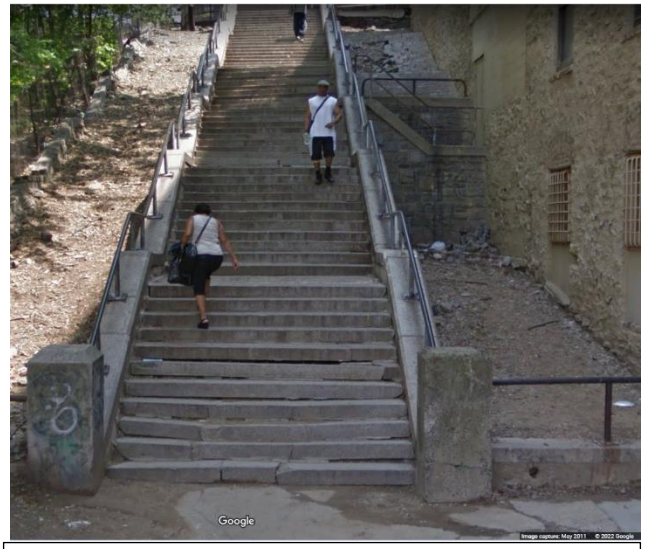


Figure 4. West Tremont Step Street, New York City, NY. *Source: Eli Ferrari*.

After

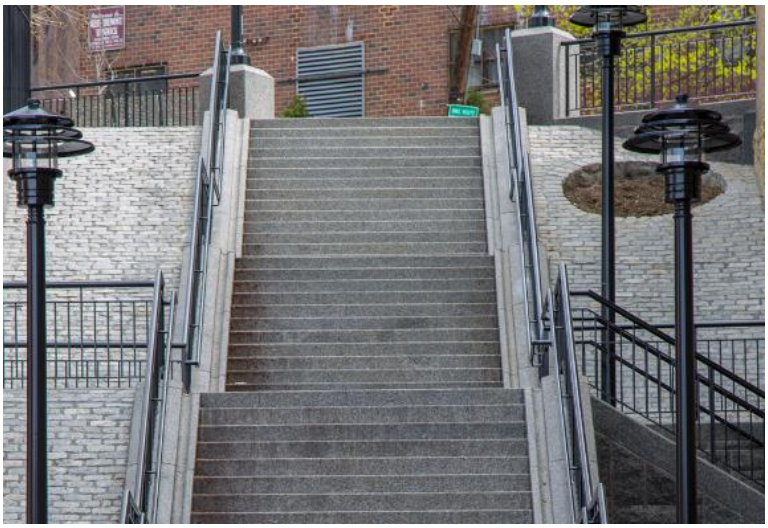
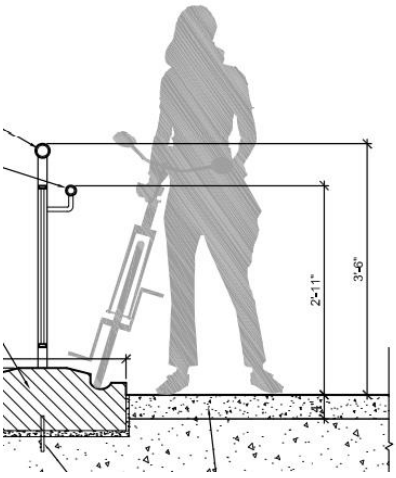


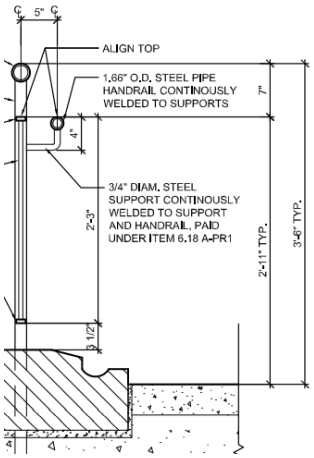
Figure 5. West Tremont Step Street, New York City, NY. *Source*: *Eli Ferrari.*

Design

Sheet 31, detail 1



Sheet 31 Detail 2



Sheet 36, Detail 1C

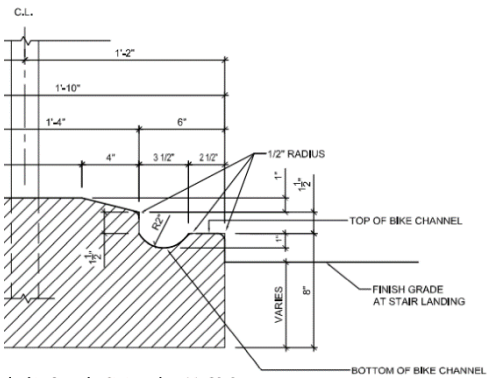


Figure 6. West Tremont Step Street, New York City, NY. *Source: Mark Bunnell, Project HWXS511, Reconstruction of West Tremont Avenue Step Stair, (New York, NY; City of New York Department of Design and Construction, Division of Infrastructure, Bureau of Design, June 19, 2017), Sheets 31 and 36*.

San Francisco Bay Area, California – Bay Area Rapid Transit

[BART Facilities Standards, Architecture, Passenger Stations, Section 8.3 Bicycle Stair Channel]

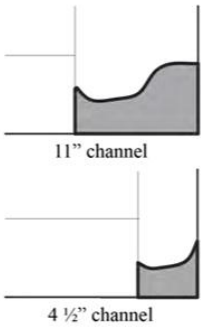


Figure 8.3.3 – Illustration of Channel Shapes for Different Widths

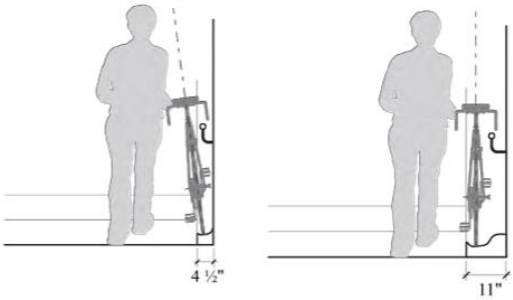


Figure 8.3.4 – Illustration of Bike Orientation for Different Channel Widths

Figure 7. BART schematic (above). *Source: Heath Maddox.*

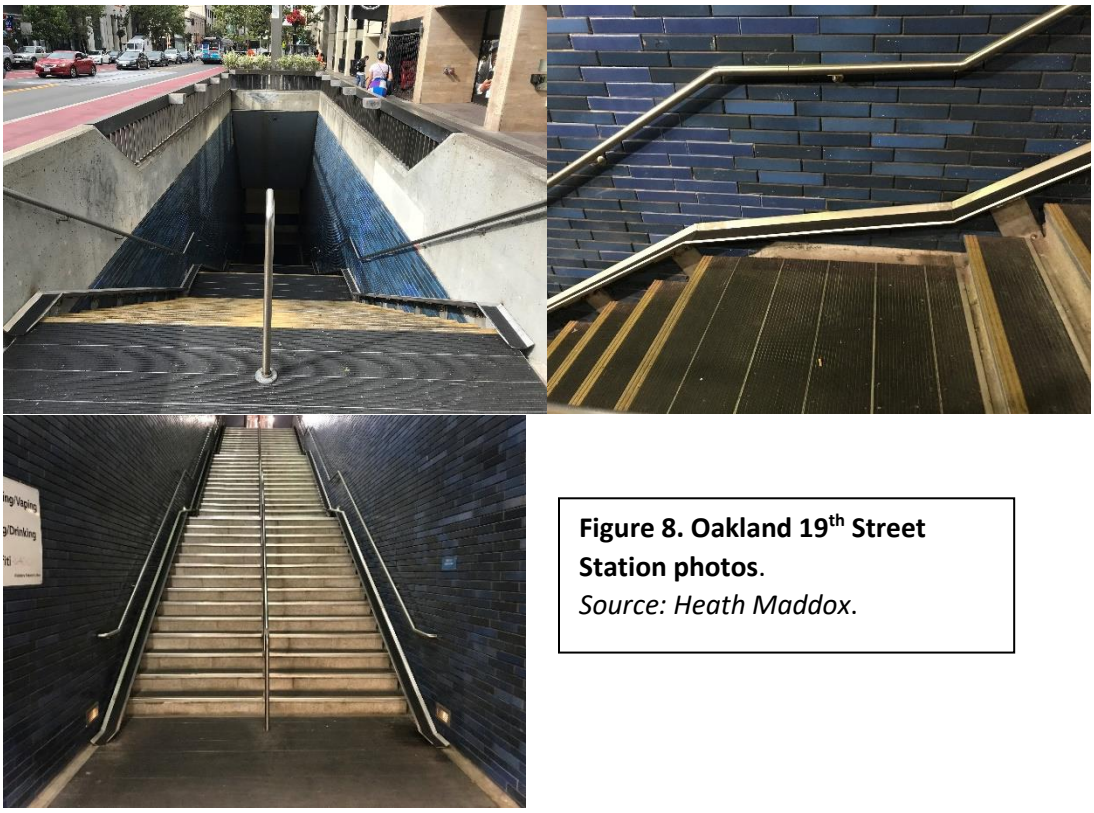


Figure 8. Oakland 19th Street Station photos.
Source: Heath Maddox.

Things To Think About

Figure 9. Narrow Runnels Limits Functionality Smooth stainless steel can lead slippage issues. Areas beneath can collect debris and trash.
Source: *Beezy Bentzen*.

Before After

Figure 10. Stairs without outside railing not consistent with OSHA/ADA Outer edge creates unintended skateboard grinding edge. Location – Burke-Gilman Trail, S. Hinds Street/York Road S, Seattle, WA.
Photo source:
https://sdotblog.seattle.gov/2015/07/24/how-the-s-hinds-street-stairway-improves-biking-connections/

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From: Randy McCourt
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Attachment Included: No

Here is what I heard regarding Question 1 Increase SUP use in the breakout group reports:

- Lighting and creative lighting (use of mirrors)
- Consider bird nesting and impacts on SUP areas
- Signing - consistent, guidance on length and grade, bench "rest areas"
- Visible access from waterfront
- Rental bicycle accessibility on both sides of bridge
- Weather resilience
- Noise buffering
- Shading opportunities
- Avoid litter - clean - inviting - safe - consider homeless issues
- Native plantings along the way - Vancouver Land Bridge example
- Need an elevator for persons in wheelchair - 1/2 mile out of direction too much for them to experience the bridge
- Direct link to Library and Evergreen lid
- LRT at waterfront so elevators could double for use (transit + SUP)
- Distinguish between cyclist and walking spaces

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Walls -

- All the creative wall designs are welcome
- I feel at though the project should inventory all vertical surfaces created by the project and the strategy(s) being taken to address the concepts presented. This could range from stark-blank to creative and iconic treatments.
- I like the concept presented as "Community with the Bridge" where vertical faces that are visible are seen as opportunities to integrate the project and the community

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One more idea that was triggered by the reference to the LRT Zoo tunnel geologic history - another example is similar to the walk along the Grand Canyon south rim that talks about the geological history as another example.
Randy

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Landscaping

- The images show landscapes under the structures. Is there adequate research of what vertical height, solar access and water barrier can be done to succeed v. most of the current examples where the areas become mud/dirt or parking because everything dies. If the space is not adequate for natural landscaping will you be using native basalt boulders in some creative manner as has been done by ODOT to address these spaces recently to reduce maintenance costs?
- The comparable images/pictures of other bridges showed a lot of pathways below the bridges - they were all direct, not circuitous or out-of-direction as is being described with IBR....seems like others do direct paths so why wouldn't IBR?
- This example at I-5/Wilsonville Road shows a combination of walls and landscaping up to the bridges - but underneath and approaching the bridge things get pretty much hard-scaped. These transitions need to be analyzed to avoid the mud/dead outcomes mentioned above
- Using water(fall) to create white noise to offset highway noise (old Embarcadero Plaza example next to the removed Embarcadero Freeway in SF)

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Having listened to the veiled attempts at public comment virtually - please consider simply using chat pods and allowing folks to turn on audio - the phone thing is way too cumbersome and complex for the citizens (as it has been proven folks are not using all the #s and you spend more time explaining how to use it than actual comments). If you don't want input that would be one thing - but I believe you do want input - so use the

various virtual technologies that allow you to securely and easily allow folks to provide verbal comments. All the virtual tools have these controls (Zoom, Teams, Google Meets) -- it seems insincere to not utilize tools that are customer friendly.