

# EXECUTIVE STEERING GROUP (ESG) MEETING

## HIGH-LEVEL MEETING SUMMARY

January 20, 2021, 1 PM - 3 PM

ESG Members in Attendance: Director Kris Strickler, Secretary Roger Millar, Deputy Chief of Staff Sonia Schmanski, Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle, Board Chair Scott Hughes, Metro Council President Lynn Peterson, CEO Doug Kelsey, CEO Shawn Donaghy, Chief Public Affairs Officer Kristen Leonard, CEO Julianna Marler, CAG Co-Chair Lynn Valenter

ESG Members not in Attendance: CAG Co-Chair Ed Washington

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

Deb Nudelman, Senior Facilitator, welcomed the group. Deb shared a closed caption reminder, informing attendees how to access closed captions in both English and Spanish. Deb shared introductory webinar participation tips and pointed attendees towards a program resource to assist with technology troubleshooting.

Deb informed the attendees that there would be an opportunity for public comment at the end of the meeting, but that the public could submit comments in written form by submitting to [info@interstatebridge.org](mailto:info@interstatebridge.org) with “ESG Public Comment” in the subject line, or verbal form by calling the number 888-503-6735 and stating “ESG Public Comment” before sharing their message.

Greg Johnson, IBR Program Administrator, welcomed the group and shared the importance of the work that the Executive Steering Group (ESG) will be undertaking. He shared a few high-level updates informing the ESG that members of the Bi-State Legislative Committee had received updates on standing up the Community Advisory Group (CAG) and the Equity Advisory Committee (EAG) as well as an announcement of the recently launched Interstate Bridge Program website.

Greg informed the ESG that the IBR program will be shifting into a higher gear with work beginning around Purpose & Need and Community Vision & Values. He shared that with this shift, the program will become much more public facing moving forward.

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

Kris Strickler, Director of the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), shared his thanks to the program team and support for the IBR program. He informed the attendees that ODOT was working hard to attend to the difficult situations the state faces with compassion.

Secretary Millar, Director of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), shared his appreciation for the program.

Sonia Schmanski, Deputy Chief of Staff for Mayor Ted Wheeler, shared that the City of Portland has welcomed Jo Ann Hardesty as the new Transportation Commissioner. She informed the attendees that a decision as to who will represent the City of Portland on the ESG will be made in advance of the next ESG meeting.

Vancouver Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle shared that a Washington State representative highlighted that the draft transportation package recently released in the Washington State House of Representatives includes \$1 billion in funding for the IBR program.

Scott Hughes, Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC) Board Chair, shared his support for the IBR program and his enthusiasm for moving quickly.

Lynn Peterson, Metro Council President, shared her support for the bridge and for maintaining a program pace that ensures that everybody is brought along. She stressed the importance of consensus and maintaining a regional balance.

Doug Kelsey, TriMet General Manager, informed the group that he will be retiring from TriMet in March. He shared that an interim ESG representative from TriMet will be announced shortly.

Shawn Donaghy, C-TRAN CEO, shared his excitement regarding Washington State's financial commitment to the IBR program, and expressed his support for the IBR program.

Kristin Leonard, Port of Portland Chief Public Affairs Officer, shared her congratulations to Doug Kelsey on his retirement. She thanked Greg Johnson for his willingness to provide a brief in an upcoming Port of Portland commissioner meeting on the IBR program.

Julianna Marler, Port of Vancouver CEO, thanked the IBR team for their work in preparing for the ESG meetings.

Lynn Valenter, CAG Co-Chair, shared her excitement for the IBR program and eagerness to represent her community.

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

## Decision: Standing up the Community Advisory Group (CAG)

Johnell Bell, Co-Facilitator of the CAG and IBR Chief Equity Officer, shared that today the ESG will be receiving an overview of the CAG selection process as well as a list of names for approval. Johnell thanked CAG Co-Chairs Lynn Valenter and Ed Washington as well as the ESG and their staff, for their collective time and effort in helping to stand up the CAG.

Johnell provided a look at the CAG organizational appointment recruitment process. He shared that the program had considered 300 potential Community Based Organizations (CBOs), and in collaboration with the

selection committee refined the list to 22 finalists who the co-facilitators and members of the program team connected with to extend an invitation to join the CAG.

Johnell then presented on the at-large applicant selection process. He shared the open application time (December 1-27) and recruitment methods, announcing that the program had received 498 applications. Johnell informed the group that applications had been screened through a blind screening process and reviewed during the week of December 28 with interviews for top applicants held beginning on January 5.

Johnell shared the CAG organizational appointment criteria and the list of Oregon organizational appointments. Johnell noted that the program team had received direction to include public transit representatives for Oregon and Washington, and that those names are forthcoming. He then presented the list of regional organizational appointments.

Secretary Millar asked for clarification on the new public transit representative seat. Johnell shared that the representative would speak to the experience of a transit rider.

Lisa Keohokalole Schauer, CAG Co-Facilitator and IBR Strategic Communications Lead, presented the Washington confirmed organizational appointments. Lisa reminded the attendees that the CAG would not be the only opportunity for the community to engage with the program. She further reminded attendees that working groups would be formed on specific interest areas.

Lisa then shared an introduction to the CAG at-large selection process. She provided details on initial screening, applicant essay review and the selection team review. She informed the group that 12 top applicants were invited for interviews in early January 2021.

Johnell introduced the list of Oregon at-large members and Lisa did the same for the list of Washington at-large members. Lisa shared an overview of at-large applicant demographic data including a look at race, gender, age, home ZIP code, and commuter behavior.

Johnell shared the next steps for the CAG and the EAG, notifying the attendees of the combined EAG and CAG orientation on Saturday, January 30, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM, as well as the first EAG meeting on January 25 running from 5:30 – 7:30 PM and the first CAG meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup> running from 4:00 – 6:00 PM.

Lynn Valenter, CAG Co-Chair, indicated her support and appreciation for the rich qualitative and quantitative approaches to CAG selection on behalf of both her and CAG Co-Chair Ed Washington who was absent.

Doug Kelsey asked the IBR team to weigh in on the disability community's representation on the CAG. Greg Johnson responded, sharing that both the CAG and EAG would include disability community representation. Greg added that the EAG will include Disability Rights Oregon in its membership.

Deb Nudelman asked the group to go once around the virtual table and indicate their concurrence for the CAG member list.

Lynn Valenter shared her concurrence on behalf of the Co-Chairs.

Julianna Marler shared her concurrence. She thanked the group for their work.

Kristen Leonard shared her concurrence. She thanked the group commending the work that had been done.

Shawn Donaghy shared his concurrence. He thanked the group for their hard work and attention to diversity.

Doug Kelsey shared his concurrence. He cautioned the team about how to choose a transit representative, advising them to focus on a breadth of experience as opposed to advocacy. Greg responded, noting that the IBR program partner staff were tasked with identifying the two CAG transit representatives.

Lynn Peterson shared her concurrence. She thanked the team for listening to the I-205 conversation and shared her support for the selection of a transit representative and encouraged the team to look at the Getting There Together Coalition as well.

Scott Hughes shared his concurrence. He thanked the IBR team.

Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle shared her concurrence. She thanked the team and the CAG applicants.

Sonia Schmanski shared her concurrence. She shared her appreciation for the diversity of the CAG and highlighted the layered experience of the community members on the list.

Secretary Roger Millar shared his concurrence. He thanked the team.

Director Kris Strickler shared his concurrence. He thanked the staff team as well as the CAG Co-Chairs for their time and effort on the list. He stressed the importance of listening to this group.

Deb thanked the ESG and announced that the CAG list had full concurrence. Greg Johnson announced that Ed Washington and Lynn Valenter were now official Co-Chairs of the CAG, rather than interim. Deb reminded the team that the CAG bios would be made public shortly.

## Information: Standing up the Equity Advisory Group (EAG)

Johnell provided a refresher on the purpose of the EAG, sharing that it is to provide laser-focus on the project's potential impacts and benefits for communities of concern, communities of color, and Environmental Justice. He described the key functions of the EAG, reminding the attendees that the group helps to fulfill IBR leadership's commitment to prioritize equity throughout the course of the program, helps to monitor and provide oversight of equity throughout the program in all elements and to make recommendations to IBR leadership regarding the program's process, policies, and decisions that have the potential to impact communities of concern.

Johnell presented a summary of the EAG recruitment process, sharing that the IBR equity team is working on obtaining commitments from selected organizations and conducting interviews with the 12 selected candidates. Johnell shared that the program had received 59 applications for the EAG at-large seats and notified the attendees that Dr. Roberta Hunte has been selected to be the EAG facilitator.

Johnell shared a demographic breakdown of the at-large interviewees. The demographics breakdown provided a look at race/ethnicity, gender identity, housing, disability status and age. Johnell reminded the attendees that the first EAG meeting is planned for January 25, 5:30-7:30 PM and opened the discussion for questions.

Sonia Schmanski shared her appreciation for the program not only committing to, but centering equity. She requested information regarding the touchpoints of the EAG with the ESG. Greg Johnson shared that the EAG will be ensuring that decisions made by the groups center equity. Johnell added that the EAG will look through Purpose & Need and Community Vision & Values to ensure equity.

Secretary Millar clarified that the EAG will be engaged with the ESG process, but that the group will also set their own priorities in guiding equity as a part of the program. Greg agreed, explaining that the EAG is a proactive group rather than a reactive group.

## Information: IBR Purpose & Need and Community Vision & Values

Chris Regan, Environmental Manager, provided a high-level look at the program timeline and the process for updating the Purpose & Need statement and establishing the Community Vision & Values. He then highlighted the iterative nature of the work as well as the ESG's touchpoints during the process. Chris shared that the program team is hoping to have a Purpose & Need statement and Community Vision & Values by late May to bring in front of the Bi-State Legislative Committee for consideration.

Deb Nudelman reminded the ESG that there are detailed schedules in the ESG meeting packets that provide a deeper look at the pieces referenced in the presentation.

Mayor McEnery-Ogle requested clarification on the community engagement program for updating Purpose & Need. Chris Regan shared that there is an in-depth community engagement plan. Greg Johnson added that one of the main events is a two-week open house in the last two weeks of February. Lisa added that there will be a wide variety of events. She promised to share summary documents of IBR community engagement activities before the next meeting.

Lynn Peterson shared her appreciation for the stress on iterations and added that she would encourage the team to allow for more than two iterations between the community and advisory groups. Greg Johnson shared that the IBR team will not be short circuiting the iterative process. President Peterson thanked the team.

Secretary Millar shared that the Purpose & Need and Vision & Values part of this program is critical to the quality of the program result. He added that the team should take their time to ensure a quality final product.

Secretary Millar also stressed the importance of including the tribal partners in conversations. Greg Johnson informed the ESG that the CAG is not the conduit for consultation with the tribal partners. He added that the program is in constant contact with tribal liaisons at the two state Department of Transportations. Greg informed the ESG that letters were sent to 32 tribes with offers for consultation on the IBR program. Greg reiterated his commitment to ensuring that issues will be heard, while balancing the importance of the program schedule. Greg shared that Thomas Goldstien will be the IBR program's FHWA and FTA representative.

Mayor McEnerny-Ogle asked for the communication plan. Deb Nudelman reiterated that the ESG members will be getting more information on the engagement plan in materials and at the next meeting.

President Peterson shared her opinion that the traffic models used will need to be revisited to ensure that the priorities of the region are reflected for the Purpose & Need statement. Greg Johnson responded, explaining that the program team is in the process of putting together Intergovernmental Agreements (IGAs) to revisit the modeling. President Peterson thanked Greg for his comment and added that the traffic engineering assumptions were her main concern.

Director Strickler thanked Greg for his careful attention to the process.

## Information: Conceptual Finance Plan

Frank Green, IBR Assistant Program Administrator, presented a brief overview of the IBR Conceptual Finance Plan. He explained that the purpose of the Conceptual Finance Plan was to provide a high-level look at the potential program costs to the Bi-State Legislative Committee in December 2020. He shared that the plan looked at several potential funding sources and shared a summary of the preliminary funding scenarios as well as the rough estimate of a range for the funding gap.

Frank noted that the program will continue to seek future funding options and refine the funding scenarios based on the best available information.

President Peterson requested that the program provide practical design options with high and low-cost highway options in addition to the high and low-cost transit options. Doug Kelsey asked that the program consider operating costs as well.

## Opportunity for Public Input

Deb Nudelman asked the attendees to raise their hand for public comment. One attendee raised their hand.

Sam Churchill shared that they are a resident who lives on Hayden Island and do not own a car. They thanked the program team for keeping the ESG meetings open and requested that the team consider limiting the height of the bridge. Sam shared their interest in the program team considering a solution like the Las Vegas underground electric vehicle delivery system 'the Loop'.

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

Deb Nudelman informed the attendees that the next ESG meeting will be held February 17, 2021 from 1:00-3:00 PM. Deb shared that the ESG will receive an overview of the community engagement plan, an update from the CAG and EAG, and a continued discussion of Purpose & Need and Community Vision & Values.

Deb reminded the attendees that the slides and meeting materials will be posted to the IBR website, along with the IBR community engagement overview as well as the list of CAG and EAG organizational representative names, when they are finalized.

Greg Johnson thanked the group for their quality input.

## Executive Steering Group Members

Attendees	Organization
Director Kris Strickler	Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)
Secretary Roger Millar	Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
Deputy Chief of Staff Sonia Schmanski	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
CEO Doug Kelsey	TriMet
CEO Shawn Donaghy	C-TRAN
Chief Public Affairs Officer Kristen Leonard	Port of Portland
CEO Julianna Marler	Port of Vancouver
Lynn Valenter	Community Advisory Group Co-Chair

## Presenters

Attendees	Organization
Greg Johnson, Program Administrator	IBR program team
Frank Green, Assistant Program Administrator	IBR program team
Lisa K. Schauer, Strategic Communications, Community Advisory Group co-facilitator	IBR program team
Johnell Bell, Chief Equity Officer, Community Advisory Group co-facilitator	IBR program team
Chris Regan, Environmental Manager	IBR program team
Deb Nudelman, Lead Facilitator	IBR program team

## Additional Participants

70 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 here: <https://interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/esg-january-meeting/>

## Public Comment Received Before and After the Meeting

Below are the public comments received between November 13, 2020 and January 27, 2021.



## JANUARY 2021 - PUBLIC COMMENTS SUBMITTED

Below are public comments submitted by community members to be shared with the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program Executive Steering Group, Equity Advisory Group, and Community Advisory Group.

**From:** JAMES GAYDEN  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 3:31 PM  
**To:** Info <info@interstatebridge.org>  
**Subject:** Public Comment

Hi,

I'm interested in making a suggestion. Rather than simply replacing the bridge which currently crosses the Columbia River via Interstate 5 it makes much more sense to just construct 2 additional bridges. One further downstream mainly for transport crossing since that area is predominantly industrial. And one further upstream that is closer to the Gresham, Camas area. A single bridge is always going to create a bottleneck in traffic flow no matter how wide it is built. So a better option is to break up this bottleneck and allow freer traffic flow. It was the best option when the 205 crossing was constructed and is now an even better option since this metropolitan area has been seeing so much growth.

Thank you,

Jim Gayden

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**From:** Allen Lowe  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 7, 2021 3:50 PM  
**To:** Info <info@interstatebridge.org>  
**Subject:** Public Comment

So make sure that light rail can be put on the new bridge

PUBLIC COMMENTS SUBMITTED  
January 2021

**From:** Mary Taylor  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 14, 2021 9:45 AM  
**To:** Info <info@interstatebridge.org>  
**Subject:** Public Comment

This seems like you are just “beating a dead horse”. We have been through this ALL before and just how much money was wasted on the previous attempts.

Why waste time and money here when the idea of a 3<sup>rd</sup> bridge is ignored. A 3<sup>rd</sup> bridge from 192nd in Washington to 188<sup>th</sup> in Oregon would not only help with all the current traffic issues, but would give all those accessing travel between Washington and Oregon a viable route when either of the other bridges would need repair and/or replacement in the future or there is an accident and/or incident blocking traffic flow. Not to mention that the traffic would be split between 3 bridges reducing congestion and improving the daily traffic flow.

Marylee B. Taylor

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**From:** Sam Churchill  
**Sent:** Monday, January 18, 2021 5:01 PM  
**To:** Info <info@interstatebridge.org>  
**Subject:** ESG Public Comment

To: I-5 Bridge Committee

From: Sam Churchill, Hayden Island

Re: Testimony for January 20 2021 meeting

Date: Jan 18th, 2021

Enclosed is my public comment .

[See attachment]

**To:** I-5 Bridge Committee Members  
**From:** Sam Churchill, Hayden Island  
**Re:** Comments for January 20th, I-5 Bridge meeting  
**Date:** January 20, 2021

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on I-5 Bridge Replacement.

[The Boring Company's "Loop"](#) may be cheaper, faster and more convenient than a dedicated Light Rail or BRT lane on a traditional bridge.

I have no idea whether this is true. **Neither does the I-5 Bridge Committee.**

In a few weeks, the [Las Vegas Convention Center "LOOP"](#) will open. Everyone will hear about it. **A tunnel provides the Las Vegas transit corridor. Not a monorail. Not Bus Rapid Transit. Not Light Rail on bridges.**



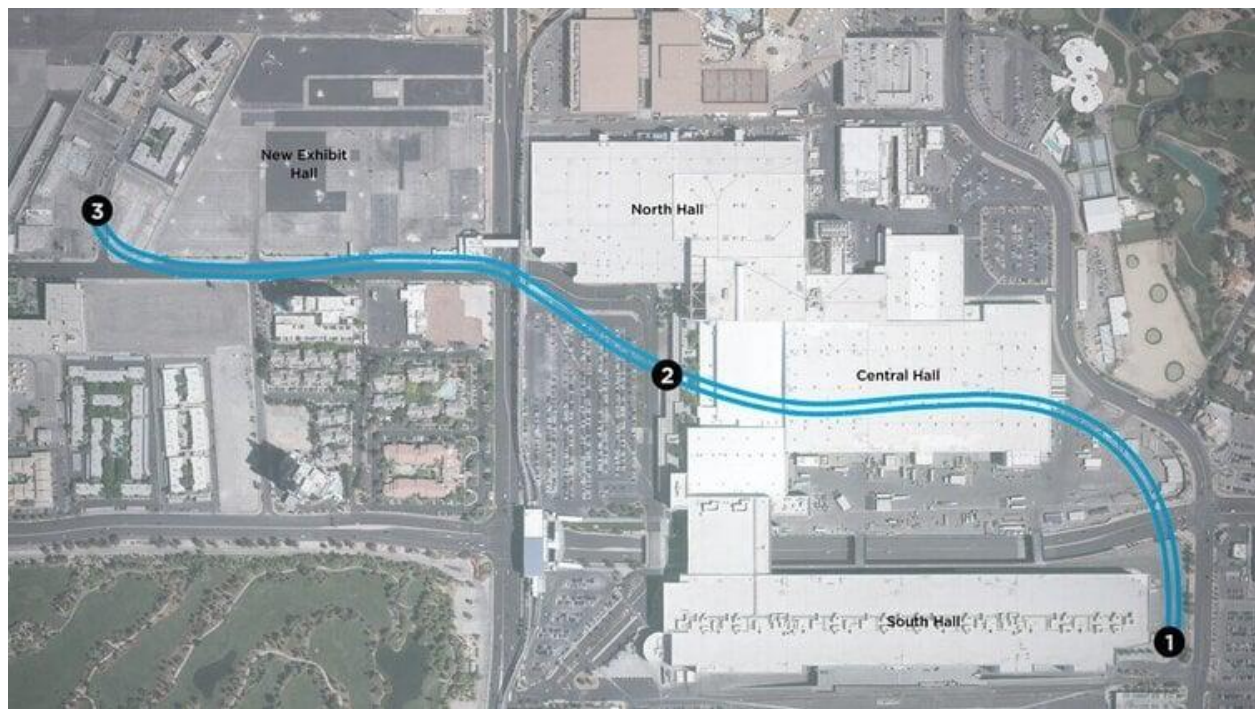
**The "Loop" concept would NOT put the entire 6 lane I-5 freeway underground, with space for trucks, cars, bikes and pedestrians, with a massive electrical and ventilation system. The new I-5 bridge can handle routine traffic.**

A new bridge, with bike and pedestrian space, may make sense, although it will cost billions. **But additional hundreds of millions for dedicated Light Rail or Bus Rapid Transit lanes does NOT make sense.** Consider The Loop.

### Why underground EV shuttles make sense for mass transit:

- **A Boring Company tunnel costs FAR LESS** than two additional (dedicated) lanes for **Light Rail** or **Bus Rapid Transit**.
- **Lower construction and operating costs.**
- **Adds TWO NEW LANES**, direct to downtown.
- **Neighborhood disruption eliminated.**
- **Using the tunnel will be FREE.** Revenue is generated from advertising, sponsorships and facility rentals. That's how Las Vegas runs theirs.

"The Loop" is a one mile tunnel. It cost \$52M and uses **Tesla's EVs to shuttle people** under the Las Vegas Convention Center. It may be expanded in the following years to include most of the Las Vegas Strip.



The \$780M supplemental cost of running dedicated Light Rail or BRT lanes on the new bridge may be unnecessary. [An FTA CIG grant](#) may cover tunneled transit. It's cheaper, with lower construction and operational costs. No drivers. It reduces congestion, adding two new lanes direct to downtown. Would digging under the river be more expensive than digging in dry dirt? Probably. Would it be a show-stopper? Probably not.



I am not ignoring the advice of the Washington state civil engineer who believes **putting the ENTIRE freeway under the Columbia** makes sense. But it may not be a good solution here. **We must connect with SR-14 and Marine Drive.**



**A traditional bridge may be the best solution. But don't put Light Rail or BRT on it.**

A multi-modal bridge won't open two NEW lanes into downtown. **The Bridge alone will NOT help the traffic jam** into and out of downtown. **The Loop adds two NEW lanes.** With NO neighborhood inconvenience or added pollution.

**The Loop is FREE in Las Vegas. That's a solution EVERYONE likes.** Would it work here?

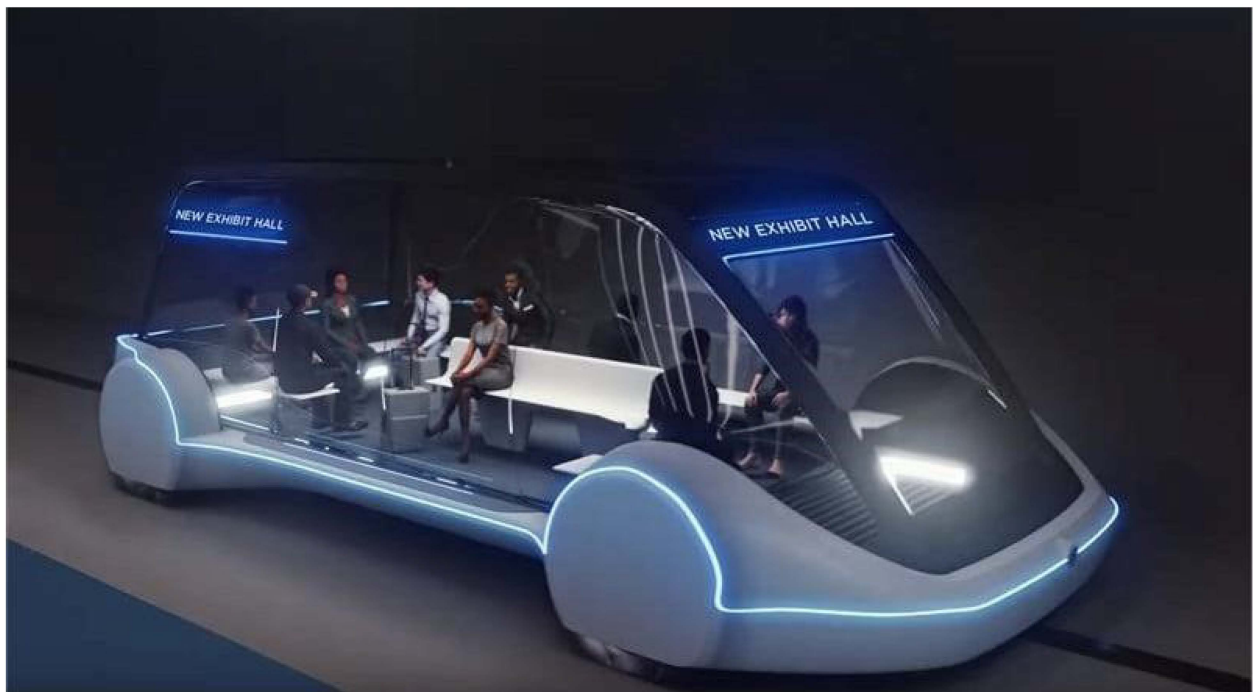
## Broad Support

The downtown leg of the project has support from the city's resort community.

"We were very excited from the get-go," Stephen Thayer, vice president and general manager of The Strat resort, told the council. "Very few times in someone's lifetime you can get behind something that is transformational."

The Vegas Loop project began with a \$52-million tunnel system linking the Las Vegas Convention Center campus, where construction began in late 2019. The two 0.8-mile-long tunnels are nearly complete but will remain unused while the convention center is closed during the pandemic.

The convention center system will employ self-piloted Teslas traveling in 14-ft-wide tunnels bored 40 ft below grade, with the goal of moving 4,400 people per hour. Extensions of that system have been announced for the Encore and Resorts World hotels, which are near the convention center.

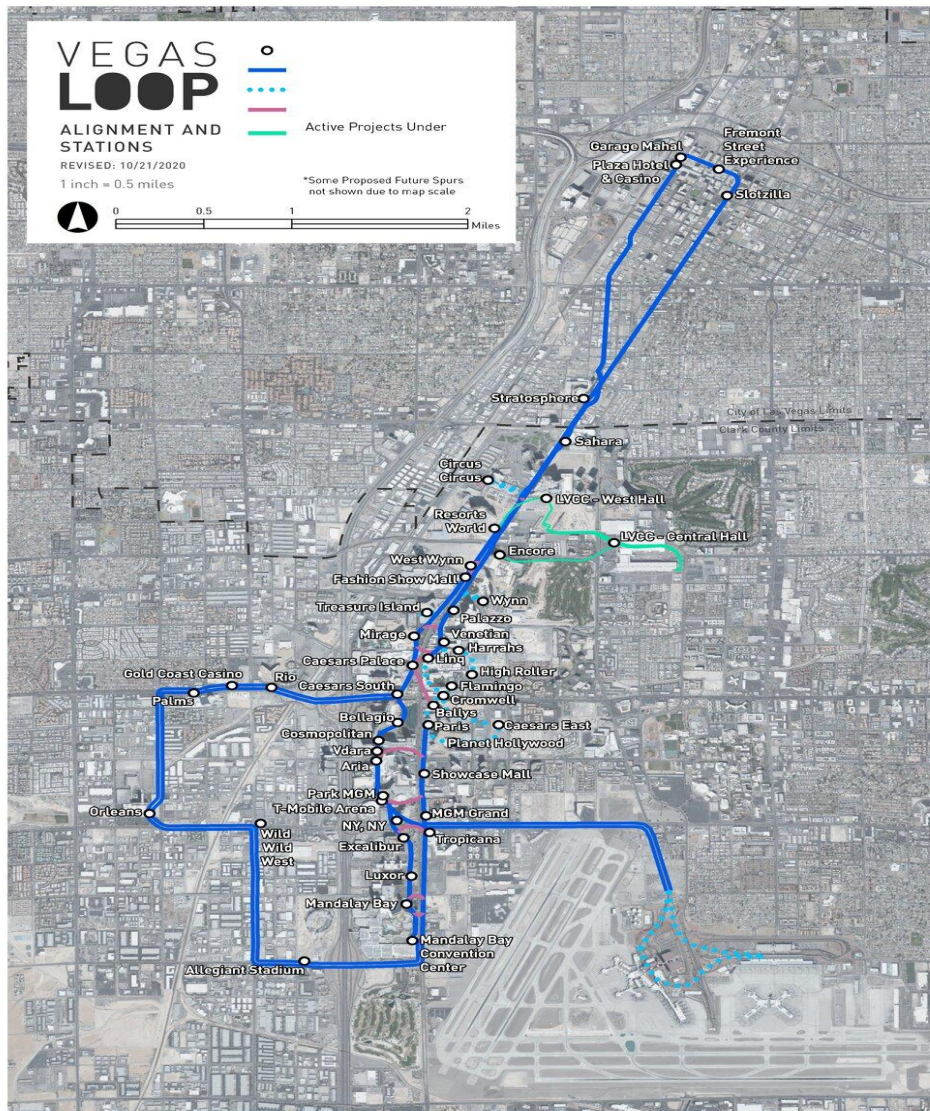




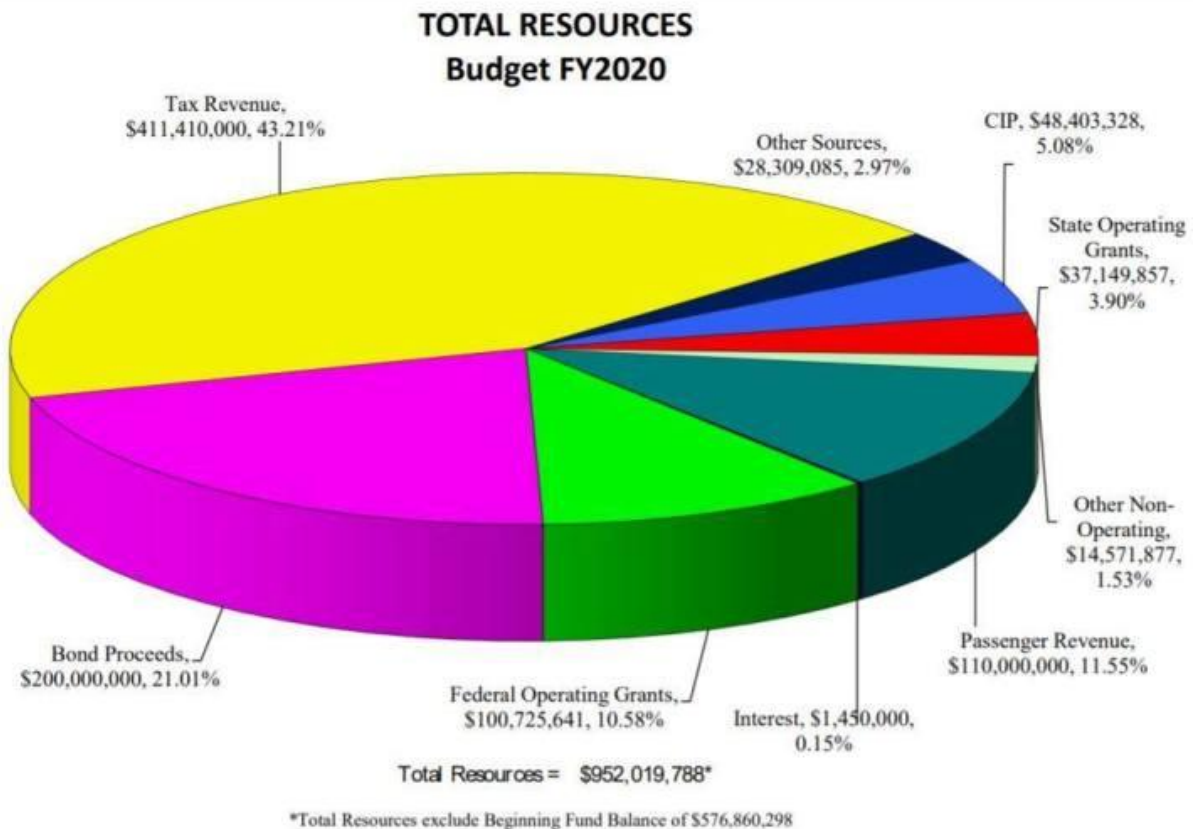
## Advantages of The Loop over BRT lanes:

- Save money. Free mass transit. No subsidies.
- Reduce congestion into and out of downtown
- Eliminate neighborhood disruption and pollution
- Reduce political rancor

Will the Biden administration kick in the money to help pay for Loop tunnels instead of BRT? Possibly. But mass transit is currently subsidized by businesses. Musk says Loop construction costs \$10-\$50 million/mile. TriMet says Light Rail costs \$200M/mile. **A downtown Portland Loop for \$400 million? Cheaper than BRT on the bridge. Reduces congestion. Free.**



**One stop at Expo. One stop in Vancouver and downtown Portland.** Possibly one stop for Hayden Island. **Done.** Neighborhood shuttles take you to the hub.



**We all want a new bridge. Nobody wants to pay a toll.** That's all I'm saying.  
After The Loop opens in Las Vegas, people will wonder why we can't do it here.  
**Why subsidize BRT or Light Rail?**

**Thank you for your time and consideration**

Sam Churchill

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[www.hayden-island.com](http://www.hayden-island.com)

<http://www.hayden-island.com/tunnel-vision-for-i-5/>

[http://www.hayden-island.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/The\\_Loop\\_Alternative.pdf](http://www.hayden-island.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/The_Loop_Alternative.pdf)

<https://www.boringcompany.com/>

<https://www.lvloop.com/>

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