

MEETING SUMMARY

Subject: Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting #34

Date and Time: Thursday, March 14th, 2024 / 4:00 – 6:00pm

Location: Zoom Meeting and YouTube Livestream

Number of concurrent YouTube viewers: 21

OUTCOMES

- Receive an update on recent program activities.
- Discuss the visualization elements to enhance understanding of the progress of the design.
- Provide input to the design team for the Hayden Island Transit Station to help ensure community perspectives are considered as station details are developed.
- Discuss and review updates on the Workforce Study.

WELCOME & PROGRAM UPDATE

Lisa Keohokalole Schauer, CAG, co-facilitator, opened the meeting and invited Johnell Bell, CAG co-facilitator, to provide introductory comments. Keohokalole Schauer asked Ed Washington and Lynn Valenter, CAG co-chairs, to further welcome the group and invited CAG members to introduce themselves by answering a prompt: *What is your superpower?*

Frank Green, Assistant Program Administrator for the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) program, began by highlighting the program's active involvement and recent activities. He encouraged participants to learn more and get involved with engagement opportunities by visiting the IBR office. The program hosted U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg, who took part in an equity roundtable on Feb. 12 and bridge tour on Feb. 13. Secretary Buttigieg commended the program for its efforts in equity and community engagement. In addition to these events, the program organized tours, press conferences, and listening sessions with Community-Based Organizations focusing on the program site and the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS).

Green shared that tolling is essential for the program's funding. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) have collaborated on regional tolling, with tolling administration transitioning to WSDOT. He explained that toll rates and policies are determined by Oregon and Washington's Transportation Commissions, advised by the Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee, which includes two members from each state's commission. They recommend toll rates and policies for approval and review. Their next meeting is on March 15. Toll decisions require a majority vote from each commission, ensuring compliance and revenue sufficiency. The commissions set toll rates, operation hours, adjustments, and possible discounts. Tolling details are expected to be finalized six to eight months before implementation. During the Q&A, CAG members voiced concerns regarding toll rates across Oregon and Washington due to their different rate structures. Green assured that the Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee is tasked with reconciling these differences. Questions were also raised about the implications of recent tolling announcements by Governor Kotek, specifically regarding the number and placement of toll points. Green clarified that, while ODOT is

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exploring alternative funding for additional projects like the I-205, the current plan for the bridge includes a single toll point, supplemented by other funding sources for adjacent infrastructure. He highlighted that the program is leveraging a combination of state funds and federal grants, and is awaiting a decision on a significant Bridge Investment Program grant. Additionally, regarding tolling technology, Green indicated that WSDOT's existing Good To Go! system is likely to be utilized.

VISUALIZATION ELEMENTS

Shilpa Mallem, Design Manager, opened the presentation by referencing the Roll Map Videos, a series developed by the program to guide viewers through the proposed investments. These videos aim to enhance understanding of how travelers currently use the transportation system in Oregon and Washington compared to the proposed changes. River crossing visualizations were then presented, showcasing three bridge types: single-level, double-level and movable span configurations. Mallem mentioned technical analysis will assess the trade-offs between these configurations in the Draft SEIS, which has a 60-day public comment period preceding a decision on the bridge configuration expected in 2024. The images presented during the session provide an overview of the scale of investments and are intended to inform rather than make recommendations or decisions at this time. A decision regarding bridge configurations is expected to be made in 2024 before the Final SEIS and Amended Record of Decision. Considerations to determine bridge type will occur once a decision on bridge configuration is made.

The presentation highlights a variety of potential bridge designs, illustrating different configurations and viewpoints. Starting from Hayden Island's west side, panoramic views depict double-deck configurations, tailored to accommodate light rail systems. Transitioning to single-level bridge options, including stationary and movable spans, the illustrations offer insights into the potential transformation of the island's skyline. Attention then shifted to the east side of Hayden Island, emphasizing the shared use path, with designs ranging from double-decker to single-level configurations, some incorporating movable spans. As the focus moves across the river to the Vancouver waterfront, viewers are presented with double-deck and single-level configurations, featuring notable movable span options. The illustrations culminate with views of the east side of the Vancouver waterfront, showcasing various configurations and the surrounding landscape.

During the Q&A, CAG members asked about the bridge's design details. One member inquired about coverage for the bike and pedestrian paths, and Mallem confirmed their inclusion in the double-deck design. Questions about the piers' diameter were deferred as the program is still in the conceptual phase. When asked about the bridge's height, Mallem mentioned it would be approximately 116 feet in the river's center, varying at different points, especially on the Vancouver side due to the railroad crossing. Safety concerns related to preventing falls were acknowledged, with Mallem assuring that these would be addressed in the later design phase. The width expansion is estimated at 25 to 35 feet, depending on the final configuration, and lane widths for vehicles are planned at 12 feet, as currently studied in the Draft SEIS.

HAYDEN ISLAND TRANSIT STATION DISCUSSION CONTINUED

Matt Deml, Nolan Lienhart, and Mahlon Clements —IBR design team members — joined the CAG to continue the discussion on design concepts for the Hayden Island transit station. Deml presented the concepts that will be fleshed out in the next level of planning beyond the Draft SEIS, aiming to prompt discussion and gather input from CAG members on how these concepts align with their values.

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Lienhart reviewed slides including the community values and priorities used to assess the program, urban design focus area, Hayden Island Station, a focused area plan showing program elements, context, and surroundings, a Hayden Island Comparison Matrix, and Concepts A, B, D, and E illustrations. The Concept C illustration was determined not to be an option because it restricted Center Avenue to the point of rendering it unusable. The program believes maintaining Center Avenue is crucial for mobility connections, as it may become necessary to accommodate a circulator. Each concept shows a view at the platform level, street level, and vertical elements such as stairs, ramps, elevator, bike parking and how they relate together. At future meetings the program will bring back different views such as elevated views looking from a horizontal view, instead of looking from a downward view. Lienhart explained Concept A slide as a concept that the program may be leaning towards.

During the Q&A, Bell opened the floor for questions, leading to a discussion on accessibility for bicyclists and wheelchair users. A CAG member inquired about the most efficient and shortest distance concepts in terms of accessibility, as well as the utilization of ramps and elevators. Lienhart noted the development of these features, with Concept A incorporating a ramp and elevators, while Concepts B and D feature similar accessibility options with both elevators and ramps. Mallem concluded the session by thanking the group for their valuable feedback and engaging discussions, highlighting the importance of addressing community concerns and the ongoing efforts to refine the design concepts for better integration and accessibility within the surrounding environment.

WORKFORCE STUDY

Bell introduced Erika McCalpine, IBR Equity Team, to begin the discussion. McCalpine began the presentation with a welcome and overview of the Regional Workforce Study, which was commissioned to identify strategies to address the need for a skilled and diverse workforce for the program's success. The program is identifying strategies to enhance workforce readiness and commissioned a comprehensive regional study to assess potential gaps in the current and expected workforce over the next five years. The study overview includes labor demand forecasts for regional public projects exceeding \$15 million over the next five years, an inventory of the current labor supply, as well as focus groups, surveys, and interviews with industry members, focusing on Professional, Technical and Engineering (PTE) occupations.

Kelly Haines from Worksystems Inc. delivered the methodology and findings in the report, which builds on prior research conducted in 2018. This report is designed to inform policymakers and elected officials about the regional workforce needs in infrastructure work. The methodology includes project data from nineteen public agencies, covering one hundred seven regional projects, staffing patterns derived from economic modeling, current labor market data, and insights from focus groups consisting of fifteen apprentices and journey workers. Additionally, interviews were conducted with 10 apprenticeship programs, four unions, two contractors, one Trade Association, and four higher education institutions. Key findings of the study include the employment of approximately 43,000 individuals in non-residential construction occupations in the greater Portland metro area. Employment for workers of color is primarily driven by Hispanic/Latino workers, whereas Black and Asian workers remain underrepresented in the trades, with people of color and women more likely to work in lower-paying trades. McCalpine concluded the discussion by outlining the next steps, which involve publishing the workforce study on the IBR program website, continuing to develop workforce strategies, analyzing recommendations, and formulating an action plan.

During the Q&A session, McCalpine addressed inquiries about the timeline, indicating that suggestions would be

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available in the coming months. The discussion then shifted to workforce requirements, with Haines explaining the variability of the workforce due to regional mobility. They highlighted that, based on projects valued at \$15 million and above, at least 22,000 construction workers are needed, with current data showing 40,000 workers in the market, some of whom may already be employed. Additional questions were raised about the agencies involved in the study and the leadership for targeted investments, as well as the availability of funding. Haines emphasized the focus on existing regional efforts, aiming to increase awareness and collaboration in career pathway frameworks. Suggestions for future workforce analyses were also discussed. Bell concluded the Workforce Study update, outlining the next steps for the program.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A public commenter expressed dissatisfaction with the river cross visualizations, highlighting the lack of detail and perspective. The commenter pointed out the absence of crucial elements such as the grade perspective, the S curve in Vancouver, and the inclusion of pedestrian or bike ramps, advocating for more efficient alternatives like an immersed tunnel.

CAG Member Participants

Participants	Organization
Dena Horton	PNWA
Ed Washington	CAG Co-Chair
Hayley Watson	Oregon State Building Trades
Irina Phillips	At-large Community Member
Jana Jarvis	Oregon Trucking Association
Jay Clark	Portland Metro Chamber
Julie Doumbia	At-large Community Member
Lynn Valenter	CAG Co-Chair
Martha Wiley	Public Transit Representative - WA
Mikaela Williams	At-large Community member
Ryan Webb	The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
Sam Kim	At-large Community Member
Steve Barnett	Tribal Council - Cowlitz Indian Tribe

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Participants	Organization
Tom Hickey	Bridgeton Neighborhood Association
Tom Sandhwar	Clark College
Zachary Lauritzen	Oregon Walks

Facilitators and Presenters

Staff Name	Role
Frank Green	IBR Assistant Program Administrator
Erika McCalpine	IBR Equity Team
Johnell Bell	IBR CAG Co-Facilitator
Kelly Haines	Worksystems Inc.
Lisa Keohokalole Schauer	IBR CAG Co-Facilitator
Mahlon Clements	IBR Design Team
Matt Deml	IBR Design Team
Nolan Lienhart	IBR Design Team
Shilpa Mallem	IBR Design Manager

Additional Attendees

- Fabian Hidalgo Guerrero, IBR CAG Lead
- Lauren Shimer, IBR staff, tech support
- ASL interpreters: Amanda and Andrea
- Close Captioner: Jamie Pellegrino

MEETING RECORDING AND MATERIALS

Meeting Recording

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L7ufaZbu_jM

Meeting Materials

<https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/cag-march-14-2024-meeting/>