

EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP (EAG) MEETING #2

Subject: Meeting Summary

Date and Time: February 15, 2021, 5:30pm – 7:30pm PT

Location: Zoom Webinar and YouTube Livestream

MEETING SUMMARY

1. WELCOME

Dr. Roberta Hunte, Facilitator, and Greg Johnson, Program Administrator, kicked off the second EAG meeting by welcoming group members, partner agency staff, IBR staff, and the general public in attendance.

2. MEDIA PROTOCOLS

Lisa Schauer, Strategic Communications Lead, stood in for Kelliann Amico, Public Information Officer, to lead a discussion on media protocols and best practices. She shared that if contacted by reporters, EAG members should collect their information and reach out to Kelliann. Members were advised to keep in mind that no discussion should be treated as being off the record, and that reporters are simply doing their job when they express curiosity and seek out consequential or controversial information.

As volunteers, the opinions expressed by EAG members are distinct from the official positions of the IBR program. As it pertains to media inquiries, it is the goal of the IBR team to ensure that the Program Administrator has the opportunity to speak on behalf of the program. If speaking to the media, EAG members were advised to listen well, take adequate time to respond, ask for clarity, ask to rephrase an answer given, and be honest, and also avoid engaging in speculation, and debating or interrupting the reporter.

Lisa shared protocols for social media engagement and reminded members that their views do not reflect the official positions of the IBR program, and that they should be respectful of others' opinions, be accurate and transparent, and always keep in mind that everything shared in public meetings is public information.

3. DECISION: GUIDING NORMS & VALUES

Johnell Bell, Chief Equity Officer, reminded members of the guiding norms and ground rules established in the first EAG meeting, and invited discussion of elements that may be missing, before committing to the meeting agreements.

- Guiding norms
 - Stay engaged
 - Experience discomfort

- Speak your truth
- Expect and accept non-closure
- Ground rules
 - Listen and respect diverse views and opinions
 - Listen with an open mind
 - Value learning from different input
 - Stay open to new ways of doing things
 - Treat others constructively and respectfully
 - Respect the role of the facilitator to guide the process
 - Attack the problem, not the person
 - Disagreement, frustrations, and differences of opinion are acknowledged, explored, and addressed.

Jake Warr, Equity Lead, gave an overview of how EAG members should use (green, yellow, red) consensus cards to facilitate robust discussion and reach consensus on decisions before the EAG. Using the process EAG members committed to the meeting agreements as written.

4. SEEKING FEEDBACK: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

Lisa Schauer gave an overview of values and goals of the community engagement program, and discussed opportunities throughout the year for community engagement and outreach. Members were encouraged to participate in the online open house event, send feedback via the interactive survey, and attend live community briefing events.

- Values
 - Equity
 - Diversity
 - Transparency
 - Accessibility
 - Inclusion
- Goals
 - Seek feedback from a diverse range of stakeholders
 - Include underrepresented and / or underserved populations
 - Embrace innovation
 - Minimize barriers to engagement
 - Demonstrate accountability through transparency and feedback
 - Establish credibility and trust with stakeholders and the community
 - Provide opportunities to meaningfully shape program work.

EAG members were asked to share ideas and give feedback on how to encourage engagement with broad representation of the community.

- Yolanda Brooks, Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) Office of Equal Opportunity, asked how the survey would accommodate blind folks, if the online open house would have a daily, live representative to answer questions, if information would be offered in the Slavic language, and if IBR events would be advertised on various organization websites.
- Lily Copenagle asked if there will be ASL interpretation at the open house events, and if graphics would be available on social media.
- Matt Hines perceived that the process has been geared more towards racial equity and asked how community engagement could better accommodate a broader vision of equity to be more inclusive of folks with disabilities, particularly blind and low vision individuals.
- Dr. Roberta Hunte concurred that we have not yet done an adequate job of engaging around ability and added that in these discussions race should not be pitted against disability such that one is perceived to be more of a priority than the other.
- Pat Daniels, Constructing Hope, reflected on the difficulty of low-income individuals to participate in online spaces, particularly those who are formerly incarcerated.
- Fernando Martinez asked if it would helpful to share a survey that captures and defines the diversity.

Lisa Schauer, Johnell Bell, and Greg Johnson thanked everyone for the feedback, agreed on the need to address the concerns raised, and committed to plan on moving forward with improvement. Johnell acknowledged that when EAG talks about historically marginalized communities, that includes communities with disabilities. Lisa also addressed some of the concerns around language, advertising, and social media toolkits.

5. RECOMMENDATION DEVELOPMENT: IBR PROGRAM DEFINITION OF EQUITY (SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS)

EAG is charged with developing a project-specific definition of equity. Jake Warr provided members with some foundational definitions of equity and invited recommendations on what other concepts would be critical to include or adapt in a definition of equity that is specific to the IBR Program.

During the meeting, it was shared that on transportation projects, equity has traditionally been defined as the just and proportional allocation of burdens and benefits within a transportation system. Process equity is when the entire planning process actively and successfully encourages the meaningful participation of individuals and groups from historically excluded and underserved communities. Outcome equity means that the project acknowledges existing inequities, strives to prevent historically excluded and underserved communities from bearing the burden of negative effects that directly or indirectly result from the program, and further seeks to improve overall transportation affordability, access to opportunity, and improve community health. Both process and outcome equity are focused on four key dimensions: full participation of impacted populations and communities, improving affordability of the transportation system, improving multimodal access to opportunity, and community health (air quality, noise, traffic safety, economic impacts and other effects).

Small Group Report Out

- Group 1
 - Equity should include language on displacement and be a framed as an outcome or part of an equity statement.
 - A definition should explicitly acknowledge the climate crisis and its environmental impacts, relay a sense of urgency, as well as emphasize environmental justice.
 - It should both acknowledge the challenged history between the interstate system and communities of concern as well as illustrate opportunities of how we move forward collectively.
 - It should be about centering historically marginalized communities and how the bridge can be a catalyst for positive, impactful change for those communities.
 - It must acknowledge indigenous communities and respect ancestral burial grounds.
 - The process for selecting a name for the bridge should center equity, and perhaps be chosen by an indigenous community.
- Group 2
 - The definition should be concise and equity forward.
 - It should be aspirational in stating what the bridge hopes to achieve as it relates to equity.
 - Show a commitment to resourcing
 - Ensuring that transparency and accountability are foundational to the project
- Group 3
 - It should highlight fairness and accessibility
 - The definition should consider how to pay homage to historic, present, and future inequities and how to address them.
 - The concept should be clear about what equity means and acknowledge existing inequities.

6. RECOMMENDATION DEVELOPMENT: PURPOSE & NEED, COMMUNITY VISION & VALUES, AND EQUITY

Chris Regan, IBR Environmental Manager, previewed some of the key project milestones for alternatives development, and asked EAG members to assist with ensuring that the program language fully considers impacts on historically marginalized communities and how needs for the bridge are distributed among various communities. Jake Warr facilitated a group discussion on what would be of particular importance to historically marginalized and underserved communities, what elements must a new bridge have in order to be responsive to those communities, and what should the process focus on to overcome and fix transportation barriers. Chris posed the below questions for the group to react to and provide feedback on.

- What about the IBR program is particularly important to underserved/marginalized communities?

EAG Feedback

- Don't victimize these communities again.

- We should prioritize transit so users are heard and considered, and start to shift towards more communal forms of transportation and not just center cars.
- We should focus on how the bridge can accentuate the relationship between the communities it seeks to connect.
- What elements do you think a new bridge or structure should have to be supportive or responsive to the needs of historically marginalized and underserved communities?

EAG Feedback

- We should prepare the community to be a part of the construction of the bridge. We should support the vocational school system and community colleges, and get students ready to work on the IBR project.
- The design of the bridge should reflect the diversity of the community.
- If tolls are implemented, we should provide vouchers/pass to low-income folks to lower the cost of people using the bridge.
- What should the process of planning, designing, and building a new bridge focus on when considering the needs of those who experience transportation barriers in their daily lives? How can the program address / fix these?

EAG feedback

- We should identify MWESB firms to get them involved in the process so they can access the many contracting opportunities this project will have.
- Going beyond building the bridge, making a collaborative effort to continue investing in the communities moving forward.
- We should consider how low-income individuals get to employment opportunities.
- Affordability to keep cost low for folks. It is needed and going to affect everyone.
- Safety considerations and resources for potential mental health crises on the bridge.

Chris Regan provided additional context around the need to define Purpose & Need, as well as Community Vision & Values, for the IBR program.

- Previously identified needs
 - Seismic vulnerability
 - Substandard bicycle and pedestrian facilities
 - Limited public transportation options
 - Growing travel demand and congestion
 - Safety and vulnerability to incidents
 - Impaired freight movement.
- Previous identified vision & values
 - Community quality of life
 - Mobility, reliability, accessibility, congestion reduction & efficiency
 - Modal choice
 - Safety
 - Regional Economy and Freight Mobility

- Stewardship of natural and human resources
- Equity
- Cost-effectiveness and financial resources
- Bi-state and local cooperation
- Community engagement

Due to time constraints, EAG members were encouraged to take time after the meeting to return to the three questions posed previously and send feedback to Jake:

- What about the IBR program is particularly important to underserved/marginalized communities?
- What elements do you think a new bridge or structure should have to be supportive or responsive to the needs of historically marginalized and underserved communities?
- What should the process of planning, designing, and building a new bridge focus on when considering the needs of those who experience transportation barriers in their daily lives? How can the program address / fix these?

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was submitted.

8. WRAP UP

Dr. Roberta Hunte reminded members that the next EAG meeting would be scheduled for March 8th at 5:30pm-7:30pm, and asked folks to share takeaways and thoughts to return to at future meetings.

- One member reiterated the impact and importance of EAG being a more equitable space for all the diversity of its members.
- Another member offered a connection to staff at WSDOT for any ADA assistance on the IBR program.
- One member expressed satisfaction in EAG's commitment in answering the "why" question around equity.

Dr. Roberta Hunte thanked everyone for attending the second EAG meeting.

Adjourn – the meeting adjourned at 7:45pmPT

ATTENDEES

Attendees	Organization
Greg Johnson	IBR Program Administrator

February 15, 2021

Attendees	Organization
Johnell Bell	IBR Chief Equity Officer
Jake Warr	IBR Equity Lead
Dr. Roberta Hunte	EAG Facilitator
Lisa Keohokalole Schauer	Strategic Communications Lead
Chris Lepe	IBR Equity Panel
Tanya Adams	IBR Equity Panel
Shona Carter	Community Foundation of SW Washington
Lily Copenagle	NAACP Portland
Yolanda Brooks	Washington State Department of Transportation
Lee Helfend	Community Member
Matthew Hines	Community Member
Megan Marie Johnson	Community Member
Karyn Kameroff	Community Member
Fernando Martinez	Northwest Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council
Steve Nakana	Port of Portland
Sydney Johnson	Fourth Plain Forward
Pat Daniels	Constructing Hope

Meeting Recording and Materials

A recording of the meeting and meeting materials are available on the [program website](#).