EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP (EAG) MEETING #6

Subject: EAG Meeting #6 Summary

Date and Time: Monday, May 17, 2021, 5:30pm to 7:30pm PT

Location: Zoom Webinar and YouTube Livestream

WELCOME

Dr. Roberta Hunte, EAG Facilitator, welcomed members to the meeting, explained how to view closed captions, provided webinar participation instructions, and previewed the meeting agenda:

- Getting to know you
- Program Administrator update
- Report out from EAG member check-ins
- Equity Framework status update
- Data deep dive and discussion
- Public comment
- Wrap up

1. GETTING TO KNOW YOU

EAG members broke out into small groups to engage in informal, team-building discussions about what has been keeping folks centered and grounded during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

Greg Johnson, Program Administrator, informed EAG members that the program was still awaiting written guidance from federal partners regarding the draft equity and climate language in the Purpose & Need statement that was submitted for preliminary review in March. The program has also been keeping federal partners informed about other potential changes since the previous planning effort that the community and other program partners want to see addressed.

Regarding four potential pathways through National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process mentioned in previous EAG meetings, Mr. Johnson acknowledged a growing consensus against starting the environmental review process over again. At the upcoming Executive Steering Group (ESG) meeting, the program will provide an overview of the path forward, which will also be presented to the Bi-state Legislative Committee for their review and approval. Discussion will also focus on the equity framework, as well as any updates regarding pending federal guidance.

Mr. Johnson shared updates from the Community Advisory Group (CAG), noting that CAG members had reached consensus on the CAG charter, and will be working to incorporate edits to reach consensus on the community values and priorities. He also shared broad themes emerging from individual CAG member check in meetings, where members have expressed: a desire to move faster and begin discussing the hard decisions ahead; an appreciation for starting with and grounding the program in the bridge's historical context; the value of breakout groups to improve team-building; a need for more program updates between meetings; appreciation for individual check in meetings; and interest in how members' voices will influence the program.

Tanya Adams, IBR Equity Panel member, announced the program's summer internship program, open to both high school and college students interested in the fields of engineering, communications, and government affairs. EAG members were asked to help spread the word before the extended Monday May 24th deadline. The internship would be remote, and open to all eligible students from both Oregon and Washington, with the hope of attracting candidates from within the project area.

3. REPORT OUT: EAG MEMBER CHECK-INS

Jake Warr, Equity Lead, gave an overview of some of the themes that emerged from individual check-ins with EAG members. Some of the key themes were: participation on the EAG is a worthwhile and meaningful experience; the diverse composition of the group was really appreciated; members enjoyed small group discussions; a desire to see more data to inform recommendations; and an interest in a better understanding of where EAG is, where it's going, and how it can meaningfully influence the program's decision-making.

4. EQUITY FRAMEWORK UPDATE

Chris Lepe, IBR Equity Panel member, gave an update on the program's approach to developing equity-focused screening criteria and performance measures as part of the overall Equity Framework. Chris noted that the first elements of the framework would involve work that has already been done to capture the historical context of the program area as well as develop a program definition of equity, then turn to thinking about the structures that would help ensure transparency, accountability, and equitable outcomes.

The basic structure of the framework would start with results, thinking about the big picture objectives and outcomes that the program is seeking. The framework would then seek to identify: the necessary indicators to know if objectives are being reached; strategies to achieve those indicators and outcomes; the activities needed to implement those strategies; as well as the baselines and targets for measuring overall success.

- EAG member: looking at this approach, I think it's also important to understand what data is available and determine if we're going to have performance measures, where we started. We should think about what data is available and what can we actually measure.
  - Chris: we're going to be diving into the data in our next conversation, and we'll have a chance to discuss what other data sources we might be able to tap into.

- EAG member: Regarding performance measures, are they going to be based on the project area, or statewide in Oregon and Washington? My understanding of the agreement with federal partners is that we take a statewide approach for identifying performance measures.
    - Johnell, Principal Equity Officer: in some instances, it might be beneficial to consider statewide measures, but specifically the measures we'll be looking at would be regional. Thinking about workforce opportunities and our stated communities of concern, we need to track the progress made on equity outcomes in terms of both economic opportunity and ensuring good access to the bridge.
- EAG member: one of the challenges I'm having is putting this into perspective. Putting this together into a framework that I can visualize would help it make more sense. A kind of road map of how this is developing and where it's going would be valuable.
    - Mr. Johnson: we are taking our big picture direction to the Executive Steering Group (ESG) as well as the Bi-state Legislative Committee for their sign off. Then we are going to start creating decision points and when those decisions would be worked on and discussed. We are hoping to have a bigger planning picture hopefully next month, which will help EAG inform specific parts of the Equity Framework.
    - Dr. Hunte: one thing to think about the framework is in regards to performance measures. What are the outcomes we want to see? Those are byproducts we are looking for.
    - Jake: a point of clarification, an additional slide might have been helpful to show the basic Equity Framework structure alongside the equity definition, how we are going to measure success, how we're going to implement, and what our overall objectives are. This piece speaks to both objectives as well as how we are going to measure success. As far as digging into what the framework looks like, next meeting we will have more to discuss on that.
    - Johnell: the framework is going to serve as an equity lens to shape the way the program implements equity based on our definition, as well as the outcomes we want to see. It will make more sense once we pull all the components together. Once the framework is complete we will start to think about how we implement it.

5. DATA DEEP DIVE

Jake Warr, Equity Lead, gave a presentation on demographic data that looked at people of color, people with disabilities, low-income households, people born outside the US, households without a vehicle, older adults, and young people, and analyzed these populations both in the program area as well as in the larger Vancouver Portland metro region. Jake showed maps of the program area and region, and discussed how these populations have changed between 2010 and 2019. Some of the key changes noted: that the region had become more diverse in that period; that 1/5th of people in the program area have a physical or mental disability; a small reduction of people born outside the US within the program area with stronger concentrations outside the area; 32% of households in the program area are low income; an increase in the percentage of older adults living in the area; as well as a slight reduction in the percentage of young people. Jake also showed data that mapped the concentration of jobs throughout the region.

- EAG member: in this data, I need to see Washington state, Clark county, and Vancouver teased out and properly identified.
- EAG member: the 2019 community health needs assessment for the Columbia-Willamette has more data broken out by region, including Clark county, and breaks out data by race.

Breakout Groups

EAG members broke out into small groups to discuss: what stood out from the data, what additional data should be explored, and what data do members have access to that would help EAG understand baseline conditions.

Report out

- EAG member: one area to focus on is housing. Thinking about gentrification, we should make sure that there is low income housing available for folks living in those areas, so they don't have to leave.
- EAG member: our group talked about the ability to track displacement. One of our goals is to prevent displacement. If the data can be used to monitor that, that'd be great. Another thing was the importance of disaggregation and identifying points of intersectionality.
- Dr. Hunte: in thinking about intersectionality, our group talked about bringing bits of data together, to think about intersectionality of the populations in the data.
- Jake: Our group talked about including the raw number of people in the tables and maps, instead of just noting percentages.
- Dr. Hunte: our group also talked about partnerships. Recognizing that ODOT and WSDOT alone can't do what we're interested in seeing, we should think about what partnerships can be activated to reach strong project outcomes.
  - EAG member: this work is going to take partnerships because it's so interdisciplinary and cross-sectional. It's important to know what to ask of potential partners, and we talked about going deeper with the analysis and looking at additional indicators relative to transportation justice and trying to understand correlations, key disparities, and really drilling in on things like time spent commuting by race, income level, and age. Some of this data will also be driving the traffic analysis, and getting a deeper understanding to be able to develop indicators and identify the right partners to address disparities
- EAG Member: through partnerships you could also get a sense of what data is needed, and also what data those partners might have. There are some big categories of statistics worth looking into, like utilization of public transit, safety, public health, the environment. I know we also focused on jobs and workforce equity, and we can probably find data on employment and unemployment broken out by the communities of concern we've identified, and breaking that out further by trades relevant to the project.
  - Jake: part of the analysis looked at jobs by race and wage level. Looking at concentration levels, we saw that concentrations of jobs tended to align with where lower wage works and workers of color tended to be.

All rough notes from breakout sessions

1. What are 1-2 things that stand out to you from this data?

- High concentration of jobs where there is high concentration of low income people (4th Plain area)
- Wanting us to drill down on who is moving where and when by race, gender, mode of transit, income etc.
- The data is a historical platform.
- Point out people in Clark County at the beginning. Once the bridge is done it is a catalyst for gentrification, catalysts to push people out, making things inaccessible.
- We need to create collaborative measures with other entities who are not transportation related. How can we work with them for gentrification mitigation.
- Being able to see the data from an intersectional way. Need the data to say something like how do people over 65 with a disability live in the area.
- Who is doing data analysis?
- Are we doing our best to leverage power to improve outcomes? Need partners to be called out and on to help. Trimet has had a whole Transit Oriented Development (TOD) section and they have done some affordable housing or income-based housing at intersections.
- Really liked that the data is correlated to equity definition
- Liked that it is broken down even
- We need a focus on more than just jobs and access (community health needs assessment, council for the homeless, providence core)
- What are the industries clustered in the maps? What is the dynamic of these employers? How do we create more access to these jobs? Are these jobs accessible to communities of concern?
- Percentage of those without a vehicle
- Older population within the program area (how is program area being defined?)
- Focus on areas that have higher rates - there's some overlap on demographics such as elderly and low income
- What are we looking at this data for?
- Who's in the area? Race, economics, etc. How much better access might certain demographics have with better multimodal transportation across the bridge?
- Who would be better off?
- Can we find folks better jobs? Keep folks in their area.
- Property value increases that won't gentrify the community
- What caused some of those changes in the demographic shifts? What does that data show already? Signs of early gentrification due to anticipation of projects like this?
- More big picture - benefit between big city and smaller communities - how to find a balance
- Dispersion of jobs throughout the area
- Couldn't tell how jobs were distributed in Clark County area/around PDX - what types?
- Why less young people?
- Why did the low-income households go down?

2. What additional data or information would you like to explore?

    - Look at Caitlin's email. She has the measures she would like. Interested in finding the correlations and the disparities that exist right now.
    - Tracking the levy-ready partnership thinking about climate change, upstream dams in the river system, and its effect on Hayden Island.
    - Overlapping that looks at intersectionality of communities of concern
    - Qualitative data is as important as quantitative data
    - Disaggregated based on equity definition
    - Disaggregated employment data by type
    - Look at the density to get a better sense of what employment opportunities exist
    - It will be important to know where shift work/other employment sectors…. We need to know who is using the bridge and the connection to where they live/what they are using it for
    - More interconnections. A lot of people live in Vancouver but work in Oregon. Interconnectedness of how many people travel across the bridge every single day.
    - Is this a thing we can measure? Some sort of displacement index. Show displacement risk. How can we improve conditions and prevent displacement?
    - Folks that live there now and folks that have been displaced from these areas already. Viable action to ameliorate loss of opportunity and wealth generation.
    - Would like to see stats for all communities of concern, as it relates to employment, types of jobs by industry.
    - Cross tabulate - for example, income stats - what percentage are BIPOC, what % are persons with disability, public transit use
    - Data on homelessness
    - Types of jobs, and where people are living that work there
    - What's the actual # of people we're talking about?
    - What defines "affordable housing"?
    - Maps were hard to follow, what is the overlay of affordable housing and vehicle access?

3. What additional data or information do you have access to that would help us understand baseline conditions?

    - Columbia River Development Association
    - Workforce development organizations on both sides of the river
    - State employment departments -- refined and geo-located data about employment/wages/industry type
    - Reach out to organizations that serve the populations in our definition
    - Port of Portland GIS data
    - Nonprofits and state governments that look at public health
    - Fourth Plain corridor is "International Corridor". Rose Village is in the area that was darker, is more affordable housing
    - Downtown Vancouver: more folks moving from Portland, California, housing prices going up

- Community Needs Assessment

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was given.

ADJOURN

Dr. Hunte asked members to adjourn by sharing 2-3 takeaways from the meeting.

- EAG member: I'm thinking about how to deal with qualitative and quantitative data.
- EAG member: I'd like to make sure that information regarding Washington state, Clark county, and Vancouver are teased out and properly identified in the data.
    - Greg: I want to emphasize that this is a bi-state, bi-community project. What we're looking to do is build a bridge that connects these communities in a positive and affirming way. I hear your comment as far as cutting through the data, but we cannot approach this project as two separate communities, given the commonalities between the two and their shared connections.
    - Dr. Hunte: I hear a need for us to shift our language to reflect the expansiveness of the region.
    - Johnell: I also want to clarify that the data Jake showed did include Clark county and Vancouver. We should probably start calling it the Portland/Vancouver metro region.

Dr. Hunte noted that the next EAG meeting is scheduled for June 21st, where members will dive deeper into the equity framework and discuss screening criteria and performance measures.

EAG members were asked to answer a Zoom poll: How would you rate tonight's meeting, on a scale of 1-5?

How would you rate tonight's meeting?

Rating	Count
5 - Great	4
4 - Pretty good	14
3 - Neither good nor bad	1
2 - Needs some improvement	0
1 - Needs significant improvement	0
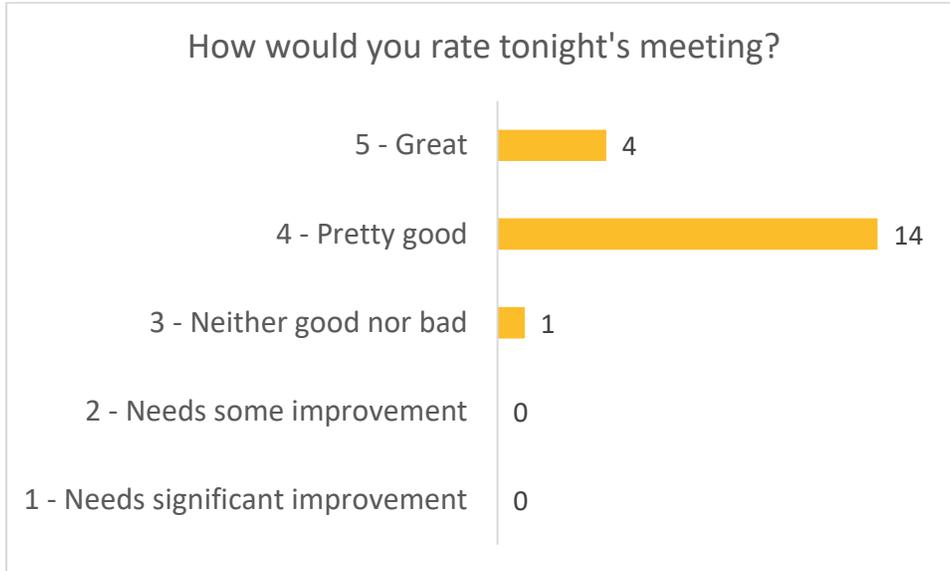
ATTENDEES

Attendees	Organization
Greg Johnson	IBR Program Administrator
Johnell Bell	IBR Principal Equity Officer
Jake Warr	IBR Equity Lead
Dr. Roberta Hunte	IBR EAG Facilitator
Shona Carter	Community Foundation of SW Washington
Lily Copenagle	NAACP Portland
Johnathan Eder	Port of Vancouver
Yolonda Brooks	Washington State Department of Transportation
John Gardner	TriMet
Mark Harrington	SW Washington Regional Transportation Council
Lee Helfend	Community Member

Attendees	Organization
Matthew Hines	Community Member
Meg Johnson	Community Member
Karyn Kameroff	Community Member
Fernando Martinez	Northwest Mountain Minority Supplier Development Council
Steve Nakana	Port of Portland
Sebrina Owens-Wilson	Metro
Nikotris Perkins	Oregon Department of Transportation
Caitlin Francis Reff	Portland Bureau of Transportation
Matt Serres	Disability Rights Oregon
Alicia Sojourner	City of Vancouver
Monica Tellez-Fowler	C-Tran
Hai That Ho Ton	Community Member
Elona Wilson	Coalition of Communities of Color
Obie Ford III	WSU-Vancouver
Masha Egorenko	Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization (IRCO)
Pat Daniels	Constructing Hope

The YouTube live stream of the meeting had 16 views, and 18 additional views of the recording.

Meeting Recording and Materials

A recording of the meeting and meeting materials are available on the program website.