

COMMUNITY BENEFITS ADVISORY GROUP (CBAG)

MEETING SUMMARY #7

Date and Time: Thursday, March 28, 2024 / 9:30 – 11:30am

Location: Hybrid (In-person and Zoom Meeting) and [YouTube livestream](#)

Number of concurrent YouTube viewers: 28

OUTCOMES

- CBAG members reviewed and discussed updates on the Workforce Study.
- CBAG members reviewed and edited/proposed potential community benefits recommendations from the Workforce Equity and Economic Opportunity category.

WELCOME

Johnell Bell, IBR Principal Equity Officer and co-facilitator opened the March 2024 CBAG meeting and invited Emilee Thomas-Peralta, IBR equity team and co-facilitator, to provide introductory comments. Bell reviewed instructions to access closed captioning, meeting participation tips, ASL interpretation reminders, public input instructions, and CBAG agreements.

Greg Johnson, Program Administrator, greeted and thanked everyone for their participation.

City of Vancouver Mayor Anne McEnery-Ogle and CBAG co-convener, alongside Millicent Williams, Director of the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), representing City of Portland Commissioner Mingus Mapps, extended a warm welcome to attendees and provided opening remarks.

Bell proceeded by providing an overview of the meeting's agenda. He then asked CBAG members to share their names, organizational affiliation or at-large status, and pronouns if they wished. He added a check-in question by asking each participant to share what kind of music they were into 10 years ago.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bell guided the group on how to proceed with public comments. There was no public comment received before the meeting. No one was signed up to provide public comment during the meeting. He then explained the options for submitting comments post-meeting.

PROGRAM UPDATE

Administrator Johnson shared updates on the IBR program, emphasizing the team's community engagement efforts, highlighted the success of a Community Forum and a Listening Session with Odyssey World International Education Services, as well as a Listening Session with the Slavic Community Center. In the

recent Executive Steering Group (ESG) meeting, which includes members of the program partner agencies, including Mayor McEnery-Ogle and Commissioner Mapps, the program and partners responded to questions about CBAG work. Greg shared that despite Oregon's pause on tolling efforts, Governor Kotek supports tolling moving forward for the Interstate 5 bridge. The bi-state tolling subcommittee is discussing tolling policies for the I-5 bridge, with public discussions ongoing about rates, operations, and exemptions discounts, reflecting a commitment to community involvement and strategic project planning.

Additionally, Johnson mentioned delays in releasing the Draft SEIS and the program is collaborating with federal partners to resolve questions and identify a release timeframe. An industry event on May 6 will provide more information on the program's delivery plan with national and local contractors and share potential work packages.

During the Q&A session, members expressed condolences for those impacted by the collapse of the Francis Scott Key bridge in Baltimore and suggested integrating lessons learned into the IBR program to bolster safety protocols. Johnson underscored the imperative of readiness for such unforeseen disasters, emphasizing the need for enhanced infrastructure safety and adaptive strategies. The conversation also highlighted the critical role of swift emergency responses and collaboration with emergency services.

PRESENTATION ON THE WORKFORCE STUDY

Aidan Gronauer, IBR Assistant Director of Civil Rights & Equity, and Anthony Samperio, the Construction lead from Worksystems Inc., shared a summary and takeaways from the Workforce Study commissioned by the IBR program and completed by local workforce development organizations. Highlighting a workforce shortfall and challenges like inadequate on-the-job training and workplace harassment and the need for more diversity in the Portland-Vancouver construction sector. The study recommends multi-jurisdictional efforts to enhance workforce diversity, focusing on underrepresented groups. The report, outlining strategies for developing a diverse and skilled workforce, is available on the [IBR program's website](#).

During the Q&A portion, members brought forth several points of discussion, including the exclusion of individuals with disabilities, housing affordability, lack of involvement from the National Association of Minority Contractors (NAMC), and the need for improved access to transportation for workers. Johnson and Gronauer responded by acknowledging these concerns and emphasizing the study's ongoing nature and openness to incorporating broader inclusivity and feedback from various interested parties. They highlighted efforts to address these issues through future study modules, recommendations, and collaborations with relevant organizations and agencies. Concerns were also raised about the aging civil engineering workforce, the lack of diversity and education challenges, and the importance of innovative recruitment, training strategies, and support services such as childcare and transportation.

PRESENTATION ON POTENTIAL COMMUNITY BENEFITS IN WORKFORCE EQUITY AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Thomas-Peralta outlined potential community benefits for the IBR program related to Workforce Equity and Economic Opportunity for consideration. The presentation highlighted the evolving nature of the program and the intent to incorporate community feedback into various aspects, including environmental

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documentation and labor agreements. Key focus areas included supporting Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) through workshops and technical assistance, enhancing workforce outreach with transportation and childcare solutions, and improving workforce equity through initiatives like priority hiring and apprenticeship goals. This overview served to spark ideas and guide the program's development with a focus on inclusivity and community benefits.

Bell transitioned to the next section of the meeting, the small group discussion for members to discuss and edit/propose potential community benefits recommendations from the Workforce Equity and Economic Opportunity category.

LARGE GROUP REPORT

Bell welcomed members back to the larger group and suggested having one person from each group provide a brief, 1-minute summary of their discussion's key points to share insights and highlights with everyone.

Members stressed the need for expansive outreach efforts to disseminate information about available workforce opportunities, while also advocating for the establishment of workplace monitoring mechanisms. They suggested involving elected officials in securing funding and emphasized the need for accessible childcare and suitable land for affordable housing. Additionally, members highlighted the need to address workforce diversity with all forms of diversity not just racial diversity — the recognition that these efforts are not unprecedented but are built upon years of groundwork both within Oregon and across the nation. They emphasized that the program should focus on the approach of identifying, understanding, and employing best practices that have demonstrated success over time. For this reason, they recommended the program invite speakers to talk about what is being done around the state regarding best practices in workforce diversity.

Notes from small group discussions

DBE Support:

- Create an outreach program to guide DBEs/SBEs on entering the procurement system, focusing on early, inclusive engagement and utilizing community and cultural events for information dissemination.
- Provide comprehensive information about DBE goals, analyzing feasibility, and considering inflation to ensure realistic contract agreements.
- Conduct an assessment of the availability and capacity of DBEs to inform realistic goal setting for project packages.
- Define specific program requirements and develop targeted strategies to address and reduce disparities based on the DBEs availability and capacity analysis.
- Focus on developing workshops and training opportunities to enhance access for new contractors, particularly with assistance in bidding on contracts.

Workforce Support, Outreach, and Training:

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- Collaborate with state agencies to leverage their expertise and funding to provide targeted support for the participation of individuals experiencing disabilities in the workforce.
- Explore opportunities to support and enhance workforce training opportunities, including for those who have been previously incarcerated.
- Reduce barriers to accessing childcare, such as location-based eligibility/limitations, by exploring opportunities for reciprocity or similar strategies.
- Explore partnerships with CBOs to utilize grant funding for providing tools and supplies to workers.
- Conduct a comparative study of childcare guidelines between Oregon and Washington to inform solutions.
- Explore opportunities to integrate childcare support into workforce training programs.
- Explore partnerships with local childcare providers and provide funding to nonprofits to address childcare access issues.
- Explore ways to integrate childcare facilities into housing development and public transit.
- Conduct an inventory of existing workforce resources and support services in the area, making this information easily accessible to enhance transparency and support for jobseekers.
- Explore opportunities to provide safe and reliable access to transportation for workers experiencing disabilities to remove barriers to their participation, such as direct transportation to and from worksites.
- Leverage urban planning to foster opportunities in Portland and Vancouver, emphasizing housing, transportation, childcare, and amenities integration.
- Apply international models to develop intergenerational policies that support workers and families.
- Prioritize the development of affordable housing by developing underutilized properties (e.g., the Kimco property and Port of Portland).
- Coordinate with local governments to address zoning code issues that hinder housing development.
- Develop collaborative training and apprenticeship programs with colleges and high schools to improve graduation rates and enhance workforce readiness.
- Leverage existing school and youth development programs, especially in STEM, by providing resources and communicating with educational districts to ensure students find sector-relevant employment.
- Implement programs aimed at preparing underrepresented youth and culturally specific groups for the workforce, emphasizing the importance of pre-apprenticeship programs, job training and educational support designed to meet the specific needs of these groups.
- Fund studies to establish realistic workforce development goals and actively engage culturally specific groups to cultivate the next generations of workers.
- Explore strategies to address legal challenges to employ undocumented workers.

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- Consider creating an employment program like the "Talking Trash" program in Vancouver to employ individuals experiencing homelessness, particularly those living near freeways and right-of-way areas.
- Collaborate with NAACP, Hispanic Metropolitan Chambers and Native Chamber to expedite discrimination investigations, addressing the defeat of HB4085 in Oregon and ongoing workforce discrimination, especially against women of color.
- Promote IBR program's work diversity through mass media campaigns to boost public engagement and attract diverse groups.
- Rebrand and create engaging content to highlight the transportation sector's job variety and employment pathways, targeting younger demographics by:
 - Partnering with local organizations for outreach.
 - Leveraging insights from those experienced in youth work.
 - Engaging with existing community gatherings and influencers to build relationships and trust.
- Develop rapid transition programs to facilitate swift entry into the workforce.

Labor and Workforce Provisions:

- Review procurement and goal setting practice and consider the implementation of liquidated damages to support small contractors for workforce apprenticeship programs.
- Create insurance pools or foster joint efforts by cities and counties to aid smaller contractors in navigating the \$5 million coverage barrier, addressing cost increases and forms' complexity.
- Develop rapid in-house procedures for complaint resolution, considering labor unions' involvement, to swiftly address grievance and avoid extended EEOC processing times.
- Mandate Labor Compliance Program (LCP) Tracker and similar reporting tools on equitable practices, ensuring consistency, simplifying the process, and enhancing transparency across organizations.
- Establish platforms like periodic surveys or dedicated websites for employees to report issues, empowering them and encouraging business owners to sustain equitable environments by providing transparency and accountability.
- Create guides or toolkits for employers with detailed instructions on implementing equitable practices, incorporating actionable solutions, and tools to direct them effectively.
- Hire an ombudsperson or liaison within companies and the DOTs to address and resolve issues related to the program's aspirational targets, ensuring close monitoring and proactive engagement with the workforce and program implementation.
- Implement mandatory training programs for contractors and their workers to ensure continuous awareness and adherence to best practices.

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- Require contractors to develop detailed plans for achieving diversity and equity targets, including specific hiring practices, training programs and monitoring mechanisms to ensure adherence to equitable practices.

CLOSING REMARKS

In conclusion, Administrator Johnson commended the members for their hard work and dedication to community benefits.

ATTENDEES

Attendees	Organization
CBAG Members	
Greg Johnson	Program Administrator
Anne McEnerly-Ogle	City of Vancouver Mayor
Millicent Williams	Portland Bureau of Transportation Director
Scott McCallum	WA School for the Blind
Peter Fels	Alliance for Community Engagement
Vicki Nakashima	Equity Advisory Group Representative
Michael Strahs	Kimco Realty
Corky Collier	Columbia Corridor Association
Marcus Mundy	Coalition for Communities of Color
Carley Francis	WSDOT
Rian Windsheimer	ODOT
Tom Hickey	Community Advisory Group Representative
Walter Valenta	Community at large
Scott Sharba	Vancouver Housing Authority
Jayne Haygood	Vancouver’s Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
Holly Williams	Community at large
Javier Navarro	SW WA Chapter of LULAC
Steve Barnett	Representative for the Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Nate McCoy	National Association of Minority Contractors (NAMC)

Attendees	Organization
IBR Staff	
Ray Mabey	Assistant Program Administrator
Aidan Gronauer	Assistant Director of Civil Rights & Equity
Johnell Bell	Principal Equity Officer
Shannon Singleton	Community Benefits Lead
Erika McCalpine	Equity Team

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Emilee Thomas-Peralta	Equity Team
Eric Trinh	Equity Team
Lucy Hamer	Equity Team
Yemaya Hall-Ruiz	Equity Team
Salome Chimuku	Community Engagement Lead
Fabiola Casas	Equity Team
Fabián Hidalgo Guerrero	Community Engagement Team
Brenda Siragusa	IBR Staff
Paris Moore	Community Engagement Team
Monika Johnson	Equity Team
Shanrika McClain	Equity Team
Robert Arreola	Technical Support

Additional Participants

28 members of the public, partner agency staff, and the IBR team viewed the meeting via the YouTube livestream during the meeting.

MEETING RECORDING AND MATERIALS

Meeting Recording

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BA3H4G5lK1k>

Meeting Materials

The meeting materials are available here: <https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/cbag-meeting-march-28-2024/>