
Interstate Bridge Replacement Program

CHARTER EXECUTIVE STEERING GROUP INTERSTATE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROGRAM *(APPROVED WITH CONSENSUS SUPPORT BY THE ESG ON NOVEMBER 30, 2020)*

This Charter outlines the charge and operating protocols for the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program Executive Steering Group (ESG) and clarifies the roles and responsibilities of the ESG throughout the IBR process. The Charter is intended to create common expectations about how the ESG members will work together and puts an emphasis on clear communication, trust building, respect for divergent views, creative thinking, the pursuit of mutual goals, and authentic community engagement.

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. Problem Statement

As the only continuous north-south interstate on the West Coast between Mexico and Canada, I-5 is a vital trade route for regional, national and international economies. The Interstate Bridge is an important piece of this West Coast infrastructure and is also critical to the larger metropolitan region as well.

Studied extensively over two decades, the following primary issues associated with the existing Interstate Bridge have been identified as significantly impacting the regional resiliency, equity, safety, economy, climate, and the efficient movement of people and goods, in no particular order:

- Seismic vulnerability of the existing bridge & regional resiliency needs
- Limited public transportation
- Inadequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Impaired freight movement
- Safety concerns as a result of aging structures and existing roadway design

- Current congestion and growing travel demand that constrain economic vitality and development
- Significant and increasing operations and maintenance costs

2. Background

In 2019, the states of Oregon and Washington both committed to restarting work to replace the Interstate Bridge, approximately five years after the prior Columbia River Crossing project was halted. To ensure regional support and cooperation among key government agencies, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) are re-engaging the partners' central to program development: TriMet and C-TRAN, Oregon Metro and the Southwest Regional Transportation Council (RTC), the cities of Portland and Vancouver, and the Ports of Portland and Vancouver.

These are the parties with a direct role in any future improvements, due to their positions within the integrated multi-modal transportation system as an owner, operator, transportation policymaker, or public economic development entity reliant on direct access to operations within the bridge corridor. Parties at the table may also have permitting or regulatory authority. Together, partners and WSDOT and ODOT will engage a wide variety of other stakeholders to ensure there is regional input and guidance on this program.

Partners have agreed to establish an Executive Steering Group (ESG) to provide advice and recommendations to the IBR program, the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), and the Bi-State Legislative Committee. The ESG will meet regularly to guide and validate IBR program work, as listed below, as well as advising ODOT and WSDOT on key decisions. In addition to the ESG, partners will convene a Community Advisory Group (CAG), Topical Working Groups (TWGs) and a Technical Advisory Group (TAG), to advise the ESG and IBR program team.

Program development is the planning and technical work necessary to select a preferred alternative and obtain federal approval to move to the completion of design and construction. These activities include:

- Completing the federal environmental review process
- Obtaining necessary federal, state and local permits
- Finalizing project design for all modes
- Developing a finance plan
- Securing adequate funding
- Completing right-of-way acquisition
- Advertising for construction

Program development work for this type of program usually take several years to complete, and will occur through joint efforts of the partner agencies in coordination with federal partners, federal and state permitting agencies, state and local elected officials, tribal governments, transit agencies, community stakeholders, businesses, and the public. Comprehensive community engagement will be developed and led by the Program Team with guidance from the ESG, the CAG and other stakeholders to ensure extensive and inclusive public dialogue. Community engagement will include a broad range of stakeholders including communities within the Interstate Bridge corridor and historically underrepresented populations, and will serve to:

- Inform the public about IBR program purpose, key elements, progress updates and opportunities to engage
- Seek feedback about community values, priorities, needs, concerns, and interests
- Share public input with technical staff, ESG, CAG and decision-makers to shape program development and inform decisions
- Report back to the public about how their comments were considered or incorporated

B. CHARGE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Charge to the IBR Executive Steering Group

ESG members will serve as a regional leadership group representing the interests of their organizations and agencies. They will deliberate based on established values and outcomes, data and public input to make recommendations about IBR program development.

The ESG will work collaboratively in an open and public process to best address community needs and concerns. The ultimate objective of the ESG is to guide IBR program development such that it satisfies legislative requirements; is broadly supported by diverse stakeholder communities in the Portland/Vancouver region; provides safe, healthy, reliable and affordable transportation that supports access to jobs, education, culture and recreation; is viable for state and federal funding; and, can be successfully implemented.

The ESG will provide recommendations on planning, design, operational approach and funding of the Interstate Bridge Replacement. Responsibilities include:

- Recognize and work within policy framework for the program including legislative guidance, state and federal approval and permitting requirements;
- Ensure adequate integration of the governance, funding, policy and analytical considerations to reach sound recommendations;
- Consider input and recommendations from the Community Advisory Group;
- Consider and advise on program funding and finance plan as relevant to local agencies; and
- Work together to advise and support expedited development of a successful bridge replacement solution that is viable for state and federal funding and contains costs as practicable to optimize benefits and makes the best use of limited public funds.

The ESG will be tasked to work with staff and consultants to support IBR program development and will engage with the program team and ODOT/WSDOT to develop recommendations. The ESG will make regular periodic reports to the Bi-State Legislative Committee and their own organizations for input and feedback.

C. DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AND COMMITMENTS

1. Advice, Recommendations and Decision-Making

ODOT and WSDOT recognize that broad regional support is critical for the success of this program. The ESG is being convened to develop and demonstrate the broad regional support and recommendations from this group will be taken as regional leadership guidance for the program informed by the community. Community input and the guidance of their representative governments and agencies in the region will be essential to decision-making and developing a project that has broad support.

The Bi-State Legislative Committee will receive ongoing updates coming out of the ESG regarding progress towards advice and recommendations. ESG members may be invited to provide additional information, context, or perspectives on group activities. The ESG recognizes that ultimate authority for IBR program decisions will vary based on the issue and could rest with the Program Administrator and DOTs, legislatures, other transportation agencies with jurisdictional authority (local, state and federal), transportation commissions, and governors of each state.

Given this context, the ESG will strive to develop advice and recommendations by consensus to further strengthen the

weight of recommendations made by the group. Consensus means that ESG members can live with the recommendation; such recommendation is consistent with an ESG member's interests, duties and obligations; and can be supported by that member. Members are committed to developing final recommendations collaboratively to achieve concurrence and support from partners and potential objectors. The ESG will provide its advice and recommendations as documented by IBR program staff, and the ODOT and the WSDOT for the Program and carried forward to the appropriate decision makers.

If the group cannot reach consensus on a recommendation, the outcome of the discussion will be documented, reflecting the diverse interests represented among ESG members. The Program Administrator will carry forward the documented outcome along with a recommended course of action to the appropriate decision maker, up to the level of the governors of each state. ESG members recognize that the inability to reach consensus on any one issue should not influence the effectiveness of the ESG's work on remaining issues and members commit to working together to advance the IBR program with this spirit of collaboration.

2. Intent and Commitment

It is understood that ESG members are representing interests of their organization, agency, and/or constituents. ESG members agree to regularly brief the decision-makers within their respective organizations to ensure support and buy-in for recommendations developed through the ESG process, as well as the greatest likelihood of successfully implementing final recommendations. All ESG members agree to:

- Strive to look beyond individual and constituent interests toward the interests of the group to create a collaborative process focused on meeting regional and local needs;
- Attend meetings and follow through on promises and commitments;
- Bring concerns from their interest group or organization up for discussion at the earliest point in the process;
- Share all relevant information that will assist the group in achieving its goals;
- Participate in a free, open, and mutually respectful exchange of ideas, views, and information prior to achieving consensus;
- Resolve issues being addressed by the ESG within the ESG structure to the greatest extent possible;
- Articulate interests and concerns to the best of their ability in an effort to find common ground among the parties;
- Communicate the expectation to subgroups and those providing technical input that this Charter is also applicable to them;
- Characterize individual, caucus, or subgroup viewpoints as fully and accurately as possible;
- Keep its organization's decision-makers informed of potential decisions and actions, in order to expedite approval for the final product; and
- Support the eventual product if they have concurred in it.

D. OVERARCHING GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CORE VALUES

Respectful dialogue: Foster a culture founded on interest-based constructive conversation, where differences are appreciated, and all expertise is valued and acknowledged.

Community representation: Honor and reflect community interests, including advocating on behalf of shared core values in a deliberate and thoughtful way.

Equity considerations: Commitment to equity of processes and outcomes and consideration of historical context

Holistic leadership: Strive for solutions that reflect a regional perspective, rather than prioritizing individual interests, and focus on achieving IBR program goals.

Accountability: Encourage openness, transparency, minimize surprises, assume good intent, and support each other.

Ownership: Establish a shared ownership, advocacy, and commitment to the IBR program purpose and desired outcomes.

Innovation and forward-thinking: Adapt and course-correct in response to new information, imagine future possibilities, and plan for the long term.

E. MEMBERSHIP AND PARTICIPANTS

1. Group Membership

The ESG members will consist of state transportation agencies, partner agency representatives and representatives from the CAG. Proposed membership will include a representative from:

- ODOT
- WSDOT
- TriMet
- C-TRAN
- Metro
- Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council
- City of Portland
- City of Vancouver
- Port of Portland
- Port of Vancouver
- Co-chairs of the CAG, representing Oregon and Washington (2)
- Representatives of the CAG (2) *ex officio, rotating representation*

The co-chairs of the CAG will participate in the ESG as representatives of the entire CAG and will serve to inform the ESG of CAG perspectives, act as a bridge between the ESG and the CAG, and report out to the CAG on ESG outcomes. Additionally, the two non-voting seats are available as needed for CAG co-chairs to invite other CAG members on a topical basis to provide updates and information-sharing, address key issues/challenges, and offer additional context or perspectives on CAG activities and advice. All CAG members are always welcome to attend any ESG meeting as a member of the audience.

2. Membership Criteria

Each partner agency identified above will appoint a representative to the ESG. WSDOT and ODOT, with feedback from ESG member agencies, will identify community members to serve as CAG co-chairs to enable the ESG to convene with full representation as the process to identify the remaining CAG members is underway. A first activity of the ESG will be to finalize and constitute the CAG.

3. Relationship to State Elected Officials

In leading this work, the state departments of transportation are responsible to address direction of the Oregon and Washington state Governors and State Legislatures. The ESG recognizes this responsibility placed on the DOTs and

accepts the guidance provided by those entities as guidance to their work as well. In addition, the ESG will work to establish and maintain open and ongoing communication with the Bi-State Legislative Committee. The ESG will invite and encourage the Bi-State Legislative Committee to attend its meetings and offer an opportunity for regular updates and input. Updates on the work of the ESG will be provided regularly to the Bi-State Legislative Committee.

4. IBR Program Team

IBR program team is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the program. They will work to develop regional support through extensive, inclusive community and stakeholder engagement. Responsibilities will also include providing technical support for the Executive Steering Group, Community Advisory Group, Technical Advisory Group and Topical Working Groups. Program development work will follow a transparent, data-driven process to make technical design decisions.

The IBR program team is also responsible for program development and management of scope, schedule and budget. This includes developing and implementing strategies for such areas as policy, finance, engagement, and technical analysis to successfully advance a program through construction.

To the extent an ESG member is relying on the expertise of their own technical staff, such technical staff should be made available for discussion with other members of the ESG or IBR program team if needed.

5. Subgroups

The ESG may form subgroups and designate subgroup members as needed for the anticipated tasks and outcomes. Subgroup members may develop draft products and make recommendations to the ESG. Subgroups will not make decisions on behalf of the ESG.

6. Working Teams

With the approval of ODOT and WSDOT, the IBR Program Administrator in cooperation with the ESG may organize the following teams to support IBR program development. This Charter will also be applicable to these groups:

- Community Advisory Group: The ESG will help ensure that the CAG is effectively representative of a diversity of regional interests, communities and lived experience. The CAG will represent regional constituent interests and input and will serve to advise and provide recommendations to the ESG and Program Team on key issues from a community or business perspective. The CAG will provide a forum for community dialogue and provide feedback on community needs, issues, and concerns as it relates to IBR program development. Members will advise the program team and the ESG on public engagement for the IBR program. Members may apply or be nominated to the CAG and will be appointed based on agreed upon criteria, and in consideration of community input received. They may also be offered a stipend for their participation. To encourage open communication and inclusion of community perspectives in the ESG, the ESG will include membership of two CAG co-chairs and offer two ex-officio seats as needed for other CAG representatives to share perspectives on topics of interest.

The ESG will commit to listening to and respecting input from the CAG and the CAG will commit to respecting the role the ESG plays representing the broad constituencies of the Portland/Vancouver region. The ESG will consider all information and analyses developed as part of the project, including technical data and information collected through broad and inclusive community engagement. The ESG and CAG agree that disagreement on one issue will not preclude engagement on other issues.

- Topical Work Groups: In order to provide recommendations on key topics, there may be a need to convene partner agency experts and others into Topical Work Groups (TWGs). TWGs will also include agency

representatives, key stakeholders and consultant staff. These are groups that are formed on an as-needed basis to address specific issues.

- Technical Advisory Group: The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) will include partner agency experts with support from the Program Team and its consultants. They will provide recommendations for technical decisions to the IBR program team and work with the IBR program team on technical design issues.

F. MEETING PRINCIPLES AND PARTICIPATION

1. Meeting Principles

- Members of the ESG will be open, transparent, inclusive, and accountable in all of their actions. They will adhere to the highest ethical standards in their work and deliberations and are committed to using informed judgment and thoughtfulness in decision-making.
- Members of the ESG will represent their agency and their agency's constituency holistically and in recognition of key community interests and organizations representing broad diversity within the Portland and Vancouver region.
- Members of the ESG will provide input to each other and ODOT and WSDOT that is strategic and data-based with the purpose of furthering shared outcomes.
- Members of the ESG will strive to find common ground to effectively address various interests using a long-term, regional perspective lens.

2. Interests Represented

ESG parties will seek to represent the interests of their organizations or non-governmental entities stakeholders while recognizing the interests of other entities with oversight or approval responsibilities, such as: the Bi-State Legislative Committee, state legislatures, federal sponsor agencies, state transportation commissions and funding partners.

3. Attendance at Meetings

Each member will make a good faith effort to prepare for and attend each ESG meeting. If an ESG member cannot attend, he or she may formally designate an alternate to attend. Alternates will need to meet the same criteria as ESG members and will be bound by this Charter.

4. Constituent Interests

ESG members are expected to consult with and represent the concerns and interests of the organizations and constituents they were appointed to represent to the greatest extent possible. They are responsible for ensuring that all significant issues and concerns of their organizations and constituents are fully and clearly articulated during ESG meetings.

5. Roster

A roster with ESG member contact information will be provided to each ESG member to foster open dialogue, conversation and sharing of useful and relevant information. The roster is provided in good faith that ESG members will use it respectfully and in a way that is mindful to the needs of other members.

6. Good Faith

All members agree to act in good faith in all aspects of the collaborative effort. Specific remarks made in open and frank problem-solving conversations will not be used against any member in other forums. Good faith requires that individuals not represent their personal or organization's views as views of the ESG, and that they express consistent views and opinions in the ESG and in other forums.

7. Right to Withdraw

Any member may temporarily or permanently withdraw from the ESG at any time after discussing the reasons for withdrawal with the facilitator and ESG members. Any member that withdraws from the ESG shall remain bound by the good faith provisions of this Charter. The entity they represent will then appoint a replacement to the ESG.

G. MEETING FORMAT AND PROCESS SUPPORT

1. Meeting Coordination

The IBR Program Administrator will approve all meeting schedules. The IBR program staff and consultants will:

- Develop draft agendas, distribute meeting materials, facilitate meetings, work to resolve process issues, prepare action items and meeting summaries, and other tasks as requested.
- Provide a process that supports constructive and productive dialogue and stays focused on the agreed-upon scope of work for ESG meetings.
- Offer process skills to support open, balanced, respectful dialogue and interest based ESG problem-solving and conflict resolution.
- Track areas of alignment and divergence, recommendations, and next steps.
- Send draft documents to ESG members for review.

2. Facilitator

ESG meetings will be facilitated. The facilitator will be funded by the IBR program but will remain independent and not take positions on the issues. The facilitator will work to ensure that the process runs smoothly. The facilitator will work directly with all ESG members to ensure their ability to represent the concerns and interests of their organizations and constituents.

3. Caucuses/Breaks

A break may be requested at any time at the request of any member to allow consultation among group members whether at an in-person or virtual webinar meeting format. Requests should be respectful of all members' time. If the use of caucuses becomes disruptive, the ESG will revisit the process. The facilitator may assist parties during the caucus if requested.

4. Distribution of Information

In the event an ESG member would like to present additional information to the ESG, members will provide that information to IBR program staff. Information will be posted on the website and emailed with attached documents to the whole group. When time and schedule allow, information relevant to a meeting will be included on the agenda and presented to the ESG. Staff will provide the ESG with an updated work program and meeting topic schedule to help ESG members and others in determining when items will be needed by the group.

H. MEETING GROUND RULES/PROCESS REMINDERS

- Honor the agenda or modify by agreement
- Listen carefully; focus on content not style
- Encourage respectful, candid and constructive conversation
- Keep an open mind
- Ask questions to clarify and understand why
- Respect differing opinions

- Seek to resolve differences and find common ground
- Be conscious of speaking time; step back to allow others space to contribute
- Discuss topics together rather than in isolation
- Share topics together to avoid surprises
- Limit side conversations and turn off cell phones or in silent mode

I. PUBLIC INPUT, COMMUNICATIONS, AND MEDIA

1. Open Meetings

Meetings of the ESG are open to the public. Notice of ESG meetings, agendas, and meeting materials will be posted in advance of meetings on the IBR program website.

2. Public Input at Meetings

ESG meetings will include opportunity for public input on items relevant to the IBR program to inform ESG deliberations on the IBR program development process. Public input will be facilitated by the meeting facilitator. Members of the public are also encouraged to submit feedback in writing (via email to: [email]). Written public feedback will be distributed to ESG members on a regular basis as part of their meeting packets.

3. Public Records and Confidentiality

ESG records, such as meeting documents, discussion drafts and meeting summaries are public records of the IBR program subject to disclosure under Oregon and Washington statute. Documents related to IBR program and committee work are subject to disclosure. IBR program staff, consultants, the facilitator and ESG will apply and conform with public records laws.

4. ESG Communications

Unless they have been appointed a spokesperson for a specific task, ESG, CAG, TAG and TWG members will always make it clear when they speak or write in public about the IBR program that they speak as a representative of their agency or organization, and not as a spokesperson for the ESG or for other ESG members.

5. Media

- Meeting recordings. ESG meetings are public and will be audio recorded. Audio archives of meetings will be available on the IBR program website within approximately one week of each meeting.
- IBR program media contacts. Media contacts regarding the IBR program process from a “big picture” perspective will be handled by the [contact].
- ESG media contact. On occasion, reporters may contact individual ESG members for comment about a particular issue. ESG members who are contacted by the media will speak only on behalf of themselves or their group or constituency. After commenting, the ESG member will provide the media entity with contact information for communications point person [contact] and request that the media entity contact those individuals for further information.
- Representation to media. ESG members recognize the need to maintain a balance between providing timely information to constituents and making statements to the media that could undermine the success of the IBR process. ESG members agree to avoid: a) making statements to the media that may prejudice the project’s outcome, b) representing another group’s point of view or characterizing others’ motives, or c) stating positions on preliminary proposals while they are still being developed or refined by work groups or the ESG.

J. SCHEDULE

The ESG will meet on a regular basis for the duration of its existence. The IBR program website will post a proposed timeline of events and decision points.

K. AGREEMENT AND ADOPTION

By their approval, the parties below agree to abide by the preceding IBR ESG Charter:

Agency	Member	Alternate(s)
Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT)	Kris Strickler, ODOT Director	Brendan Finn, Director of the Urban Mobility Office
Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)	Roger Millar, Secretary of Transportation	Carley Francis, Southwest Region Administrator
City of Portland	Ted Wheeler, Mayor	Sonia Schmanski, Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office;
City of Vancouver	Anne McEnery-Ogle, Mayor	Chris Warner, Director of PBOT Eric Holmes, City Manager
Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council (RTC)	Scott Hughes, Board Chair	Matt Ransom, Executive Director
Metro	Lynn Peterson, Council President	Juan Carlos Gonzalez, Metro Councilor
TriMet	Doug Kelsey, CEO	Bernie Bottomly, Executive Director of Public Policy
C-TRAN	Shawn Donaghy, CEO	Monica Fowler, Deputy CEO
Port of Portland	Kristen Leonard, Chief Public Affairs Officer	Ivo Trummer, State Affairs Manager
Port of Vancouver	Julianna Marler, CEO	Jack Burkman, Commissioner
CAG Co-Chair	Lynn Valenter	N/A
CAG Co-Chair	Ed Washington	N/A