

# COMMUNITY BENEFITS ADVISORY GROUP (CBAG)

## MEETING #3

Date and Time: Thursday, November 16, 2023 / 10:00am – 12:00pm

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

Number of concurrent YouTube viewers: 32

## OUTCOMES

- CBAG members will learn about the history of the program area, equity and climate framework, and Community Advisory Group (CAG)'s values and priorities.
- CBAG members will have an opportunity to provide individual reflection and practice and discuss their ideas for the vision of the program area when construction is complete.

## WELCOME

Shannon Singleton, the co-facilitator and Community Benefits Lead, initiated the meeting by addressing accessibility options for participants and the public audience. She informed everyone about the availability of closed captioning in English and Spanish on Zoom and YouTube livestream platforms. She also mentioned the presence of ASL interpreters to facilitate interpretation for attendees. Additionally, she highlighted a scheduled slot for public input at 11:45 am and provided guidance on how the audience could participate in this segment.

Singleton continued by outlining the group agreements, underscoring the significance of active involvement from all meeting participants. She particularly encouraged those joining virtually to enhance their engagement by turning on cameras, taking notes, and using interactive features like “raise hand” and “speak”. She stressed the value of diverse viewpoints, welcoming a wide range of perspectives. Additionally, as part of the group agreement, she emphasized for the “move up, move up” principle, suggesting that individuals who typically speak more should focus more on listening, while those who are usually listeners should be encouraged to speak up more.

Greg Johnson, IBR Program Administrator, opened his remarks by welcoming everyone to the third Community Benefits Advisory Group (CBAG) meeting. He expressed gratitude for the participants' presence and emphasized the significance of the ongoing discussions. He also highlighted the meeting's focus on ensuring the program's integration within the community context, beyond the mere construction of concrete and steel structures. He stressed the importance of leaving a positive and satisfactory legacy for the community's future. Concluding his introduction, Administrator Johnson opened the floor for City of Portland Commissioner Mingus Mapps, one of the co-conveners.

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Mapps extended a warm welcome to the participants. He expressed regret for not being able to attend the meeting in person. Mapps expressed enthusiasm for the upcoming discussions and opened the floor to City of Vancouver Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle, the group's other co-convenor.

Mayor McEnerny-Ogle lightheartedly mentioned he was missing out on a delightful pumpkin cheesecake brownie and enthusiastically offered to share the recipe with him.

Singleton guided the meeting into an introduction round, inviting each CBAG member to share their name, pronouns, organizational affiliation, and what their favorite holiday treat is. The room buzzed with laughter and an array of holiday treat names.

After the introductions, Singleton provided an overview of the meeting's agenda. She outlined that Johnson would present a program update, including a historical overview of the program area. The agenda included sharing around three slides to briefly cover the equity framework, the climate framework, and the Community Advisory Group (CAG)'s community values and priorities. Following this, the meeting would shift to a visioning exercise, which would involve discussion questions centered on envisioning the future state of the communities in the program area post-construction. Participants would be given time to contemplate their approach to the question, followed by discussions in pairs or triads, and then in small groups. The session would then reconvene into the larger group for a report out, include a segment for public comment, followed by a wrap-up/closing.

## PROGRAM UPDATE

Johnson opened his program update by reflecting on advice from Johnell Bell, the IBR program's principal equity officer, about the importance of understanding the history of the region and the two states involved. He conveyed his dedication to this advice by reading numerous books and exploring both communities to grasp their past, present, and aspirations for the future. He emphasized the significance of listening to stories from both sides of the river and hinted at discussing the area's history later, highlighting its relevance to the group.

He then provided an update on the program's progress. He informed everyone that the program is on track to publish the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) in the first quarter of 2024, with ongoing interactions with federal and local partners to ensure comprehensive input before publication of the Draft SEIS.

Johnson further elaborated on the program's comprehensive engagement strategy. He emphasized the collaborative effort, particularly highlighting the engagement with ten federally recognized tribal governments. Johnson detailed the program's recent outreach initiatives, which included presentations to a range of organizations to foster wide-ranging community involvement and feedback. These organizations included the Vancouver Transportation and Mobility Commission, the Association of General Contractors, the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO), the Pacific NW Waterways Association, various neighborhood associations and the City of Portland Historic Landmarks and Design Committee. He stressed that this extensive engagement is a crucial step in informing the community about the expectations for a program of this magnitude and how it fits into shaping the future landscape of the region.

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He continued sharing the update of the recent Bi-State Legislative Committee meeting held on November 3, which saw significant attendance from legislators. He described the meeting as a great and vibrant event and informed participants that a recording of this meeting is accessible on each state's committee website. You can find links to those sites on [the IBR website](#). Johnson emphasized the importance of this group, which did not exist during the last program, noting its critical role in addressing funding issues and ensuring the program's ability to implement tolls as part of the overall funding.

Johnson mentioned a “contractor meet and greet” event that took place on Nov. 8. This event was specifically designed to foster connections between the program and disadvantaged businesses and prime construction contractors, with the aim of facilitating team formation for the construction phase of the program. Additionally, he announced plans to conduct a similar meet and greet event in Washington state, particularly in the Seattle-Tacoma area, to engage in comparable discussions with small business groups. He also highlighted a segment of the program team working on procurement issues, tasked with the challenge of dividing a \$6 billion program into 20 digestible contract pieces. This strategic planning is pivotal for the program's overall success.

Johnson shared details about a recent tour conducted with the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC). This tour included a visit to the program area and a detailed tour of the existing bridge. He emphasized the significance of such tours, stating they are one of the most vital activities the program undertakes. Johnson noted that these tours will continue throughout the life of the program, including the construction phase, to keep interested parties informed about the progress. The recent tour with the OTC fostered great conversations and provided the Commission with a deeper understanding of the program's practical aspects and the issues being addressed.

Questions and comments from CBAG members:

- A member expressed appreciation for the recent tour with the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC), noting that he had the opportunity to participate alongside Administrator Johnson and other commissioners. He emphasized that the tour was more than just a simple bridge inspection; it was a comprehensive exploration of the community. This perspective was particularly valuable for understanding the program's impact on Vancouver, including the alignment of the program, the proposed path for high-capacity transit, and the rationale behind these decisions. He highlighted that the tour allowed for important questions to be asked and answered, providing the OTC with a much clearer view of the project's size, complexity, and community impact. He reiterated the importance of such tours, stressing that they offered more insights than just information about the bridge itself.
  - Johnson expressed his gratitude for the member's remarks, acknowledging their importance. He highlighted the value of the side conversations that occurred during the bus tour, which provided an opportunity for in-depth discussions and questions. Johnson noted that the program staff were interspersed among the participants on the bus to facilitate these conversations and provide detailed answers. Describing the event as excellent, he affirmed the program's commitment to continuing such tours. Additionally, he mentioned that there would be opportunities for members of the CBAG

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to participate in similar tours in the future, ensuring ongoing engagement and information sharing.

## HISTORY OF PROGRAM AREA

Johnson provided context for the rich history of the program area, emphasizing the importance of recognizing both the positive and negative aspects of history. He started by acknowledging the region's Indigenous roots, stressing the area's significance to various tribes and their involvement in ongoing discussions. He then touched on the area's past as a military and trading post, including the influence of the Hudson Bay Company and the establishment of Fort Vancouver.

Johnson highlighted key historical developments, such as the arrival of railroads in 1906, the construction of the first interstate bridge in 1917 under President Woodrow Wilson, and the second bridge during the interstate era of 1958. He noted these developments' roles in the region's growth, including the expansion of hydroelectric production on the Columbia River.

A significant point in the history was during World War II, when the Kaiser shipyards were established, fueling war infrastructure and bringing African Americans to the region in unprecedented numbers. The remnants of these shipyards are now part of the Columbia Business Center.

He also discussed the impact of the Federal Highway System, initiated by Dwight D. Eisenhower, on the region's development. Johnson described the post-1970s urban expansion, the rise of car culture, and the challenges of auto-oriented single-family housing. He praised the local efforts in land use planning and transportation, contrasting them with other regions.

The presentation then shifted to the current challenges, including the imbalance of jobs and housing, the dependence on cars and the original and evolving uses of the interstate system. Johnson explained how the program aims to address these challenges by offering light rail as an alternative to the auto-centric lifestyle and fostering more urban-centered growth.

Johnson highlighted the unique tax structures on either side of the river, illustrating how they influence commuting patterns. He also emphasized the need for affordable, efficient growth that benefits all community members, underscoring the role of the Community Benefits Advisory Group (CBAG) in achieving this goal.

Johnson introduced a map, designed to illustrate the locations of equity communities within the program area, along with the boundaries of the City of Vancouver. This map also highlighted areas where the creation of facilities aimed at addressing equity would be most effective. Developed by the city, this map serves as a vital tool in understanding the distribution and needs of these communities.

Furthermore, Johnson pointed out that a similar map for the opposite side of the river was also created to identify "communities of concern". These are communities that have historically been overlooked in similar programs and have not reaped their benefits. By highlighting these areas, the program aims to address past inequities and ensure a more inclusive approach in current and future developments. He also emphasized the importance of these slides for understanding the program's commitment to equity and its efforts to rectify historical oversights.

Johnson continued his historical overview, focusing on the significant influence of Asian Americans in the development of the West Coast and the program area. He acknowledged their centuries-long

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presence and contributions, particularly emphasizing their role in building the transcontinental railroad and other railroads in the United States, largely through the labor of Chinese Americans and other Asian groups.

He addressed a darker aspect of history when he described a site where, during World War II, the U.S. government interned its own citizens of Japanese descent. He labeled this as one of the “ugly” parts of history, stressing the importance of acknowledging and discussing these shameful events to avoid repeating them.

He mentioned visiting a monument at the Expo Center, which commemorates this history. Johnson highlighted ongoing collaborations with the Expo Center to ensure that the program not only recognizes but also honors this part of history as part of its broader commitment to acknowledging the region's diverse past.

Johnson turned the focus to another significant historical event in the region: the Vanport flood. He shared insights into Vanport, a once thriving community north of Portland. Notably, Vanport was known for its racial integration, making it a unique part of Portland during that era. The community was primarily built to accommodate those involved in shipbuilding and individuals migrating from the south.

Johnson mentioned that there are varying accounts regarding the cause of the flood that devastated Vanport. Some aspects of this event remain unclear or subject to debate. Nonetheless, the impact of the flood was unequivocal — it destroyed a community that had become a symbol of integration and collective effort.

He emphasized the importance of honoring the history of Vanport, especially in the context of the bridge. This acknowledgment serves as a reminder of the need to understand and address historical contexts and their implications in current undertakings.

Johnson further discussed the historical context of Indigenous peoples in relation to the program area. He highlighted the involvement of ten federally recognized tribes, along with another tribe that, although not federally recognized, remains an important consideration. He acknowledged that the land where the bridge and corridor are located was originally ceded by these indigenous tribes.

Johnson stressed the program's commitment to honoring this history, especially during the reconstruction and modernization of the corridor. This commitment includes a deliberate effort to avoid disturbing any sites that are archaeologically or culturally significant to the tribes. He mentioned the extensive investigations being carried out in coordination with the tribes to ensure respect and sensitivity towards their history and cultural heritage in the region.

Johnson delved into the history and impact of the interstate system, describing it as both a remarkable economic driver and a significant infrastructure investment. He acknowledged the interstate's role in facilitating economic growth post-World War II, aided by the GI Bill, and connecting the country efficiently. However, he also pointed out the darker aspects, where interstates often cut through communities with less political power, particularly affecting cities like Detroit, Tulsa, Mobile and

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Portland. This approach, Johnson noted, was often justified under the guise of “curing blight,” but was driven by prejudiced views and economic considerations.

Acknowledging the difficult history of transportation infrastructure and its impact on communities, Johnson emphasized the need to recognize past harms and ensure they are not repeated. He stressed the importance of providing opportunities for those previously marginalized in such programs.

Turning to the history of indigenous peoples, Johnson highlighted the rich and populous culture prior to the arrival of white settlers. He discussed the devastating impact of diseases like smallpox, which were brought to the Americas and significantly reduced Native American populations. He also touched upon the history of land treaties and conflicts, mentioning the biography of Chief Joseph as an informative read on the subject.

Johnson concluded by reiterating the ongoing significance of this land to indigenous communities, mentioning their fishing traditions on the Columbia River. He emphasized the program's commitment to consulting with the tribes, adhering to federal and state laws, and recognizing their government-to-government status.

Johnson revisited the Vanport flood, emphasizing its devastating impact, particularly on African Americans, who constituted a third of the over 18,000 displaced families. He pointed to a poignant image showing human chains formed to navigate the floodwaters. Johnson then addressed the issue of racial covenants that followed, restricting where displaced individuals, especially African Americans, could live. This practice was part of a broader pattern of redlining across the United States, where minorities were denied insurance and loans due to residing in areas marked with literal red lines on maps.

Shifting focus to the Portland Assembly Center, Johnson described this as the location of the internment camps where American citizens of Japanese descent were unjustly imprisoned during World War II. He noted the significant financial loss suffered by these communities, including the seizure of farms and properties.

Johnson then discussed the impact of redlining on African Americans migrating from rural southern areas to northern cities. He explained how redlining maps confined African American communities to specific areas, limiting their access to loans and opportunities to build generational wealth.

Next, he touched upon the construction of the interstate in the early 1950s and its impact on the Albina community, a historically African American neighborhood in Portland. Johnson shared his personal experience of searching for the African Methodist Episcopal Church upon arriving in the area in 2020, expecting it to be a hub of the African American community, only to find that the community had

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diminished significantly. He highlighted that the construction of Interstate 5 led to the destruction of over 1,100 homes in Albina.

## PRESENTATION ON THE PROGRAM'S EQUITY AND CLIMATE FRAMEWORKS AND THE COMMUNITY VALUES AND PRIORITIES

Emilee Thomas-Peralta, IBR equity team, began her presentation by emphasizing the importance of incorporating the program's established principles and values into the upcoming visioning exercise. She urged participants to consider these elements when contemplating potential community benefits.

**IBR Equity Framework:** Thomas-Peralta highlighted this as a foundational aspect of the community benefits work. The framework is based on principles that include acknowledging and learning from historical and current events, addressing disparities within legal boundaries, using existing laws as a starting point rather than a limit, and prioritizing contract equity and economic justice. The goal is to leverage the program investments to benefit communities, especially those previously overlooked in similar projects. Additionally, it aims to involve those most negatively impacted and with limited access to decision-making processes.

**Climate Framework:** This framework is parallel to the Equity Framework, guiding decision-making through various program phases with a focus on climate and equity considerations. Thomas-Peralta outlined key questions under this framework related to policy decision-making, design standards, processes for design decision agreements, timing of commitments, and communication strategies.

**Community Values and Priorities:** Thomas-Peralta referred to priorities established by the Community Advisory Group, which aligns with the equity and climate frameworks. These priorities cover areas like protecting natural resources referring participants to the handouts for detailed information.

## VISIONING EXERCISE

Singleton, the co-facilitator, transitioned the meeting to a small group discussion phase, focused on the visioning exercise. She presented the key question to guide the discussions: "What is the future state of our communities in the program area once construction is complete?" To stimulate thinking, she offered examples related to the program's equity and climate framework. These examples included envisioning neighborhoods where people of different incomes and identities can afford to live, enhanced mobility through walking, biking, and driving, and the elimination of heat islands in these areas. Transitioned the meeting to a small group discussion phase, focused on the visioning exercise. She presented the key question to guide the discussions: "What is the future state of our communities in the program area once construction is complete?" To stimulate thinking, she offered examples related to the program's equity and climate framework. These examples included envisioning neighborhoods where people of different incomes and identities can afford to live, enhanced mobility through walking, biking, and driving, and the elimination of heat islands in these areas.

Singleton then detailed the process for the small group discussions. Participants would start with individual reflection, followed by discussions in pairs or triads, leading to broader small group discussions. This would culminate in a larger group report-out session. She emphasized that each CBAG member would share two key takeaways from the exercise during the larger group discussion, focusing on new understandings or perspectives they had gained.

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Concluding her instructions, Singleton informed the participants, especially those attending virtually, about their transition into breakout rooms. She assured them that staff would be present in each room to provide support and answer any questions.

## LARGE GROUP REPORT

The co-facilitator concluded the small group discussion phase and reconvened all members for the large group report segment. She invited participants to share their insights from the discussions, specifically asking each member to provide two key takeaways and any new insights they had gained.

A member of the group highlighted the critical issue of accessibility in the community. He underscored the importance of implementing practical measures such as ramps, which are vital for ensuring that spaces are accessible to everyone. Additionally, he brought attention to the needs of individuals in the community who experience the world differently from others.

In their group discussion, a member shared two significant points of focus and additional thoughts on the meeting content. First, the group explored innovative ways to enhance the environmental aspect of the bridge project, such as integrating moss on concrete surfaces. This creative solution aimed to address both air and noise pollution, while also serving as a graffiti deterrent. This concept was part of a larger vision to establish green pathways that would link downtown Vancouver with downtown Portland, promoting environmental sustainability and aesthetic appeal. Secondly, the discussion touched upon the critical issue of houselessness. The group underscored the importance of providing job opportunities to the houseless community, a step towards ensuring their integration and support. There was a strong emphasis on learning from past errors, particularly in relation to the displacement of vulnerable populations, reflecting a commitment to avoid repeating historical mistakes. The group found the presentation on the history of the program deeply impactful. It underscored the significance of adopting thoughtful and inclusive approaches when addressing community challenges. This historical perspective seemed to reinforce the group's determination to approach current and future community issues with a deeper understanding and sensitivity to past experiences.

A member shared the key discussion points in his group highlighting the concept of synchronicity in regional projects associated with the bridge, noting the potential for ancillary projects on both sides of the river. These projects could complement the bridge and contribute to the broader development of the region. The group also discussed the importance of ensuring accessibility for all forms of diversity, including not just the disabled but also older adults. This consideration was recognized as a significant issue across both Oregon and Washington, pointing to the need for inclusive design and planning in all aspects of the project. Furthermore, he emphasized the value of long-term training opportunities as a key element for strengthening the region. The group saw these training initiatives as vital for building a skilled workforce, which would benefit the region on both sides of the river for decades to come. This approach towards workforce development was viewed as an essential component for the region's future growth and success.

A member acknowledged the thorough coverage of their group's key points by the reporter and contributed additional thoughts, emphasizing concerns about potential displacement caused by the program. He suggested exploring the use of funding to build dispersed housing as a solution, citing the Vancouver Housing Authority's model as an effective approach to avoid concentrating people in one location. Furthermore, he highlighted the importance of creating workforce development programs and

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initiatives within the program framework, specifically tailored to benefit houseless individuals. These ideas reflect his focus on mitigating potential negative impacts of the program and ensuring inclusive benefits for the community, particularly for those most vulnerable.

- Singleton, the co-facilitator, responded affirmatively to the member's comments, acknowledging that his focus on housing solutions resonated with her own passion. She expressed agreement with the idea of helping community members, particularly those displaced by the program, find suitable housing.

Johnson shared a relevant experience, referencing a conversation with a mayor in Michigan about an annual event on Interstate 75 between the Upper and Lower Peninsulas. There, every Labor Day, the interstate is closed down as a celebration. Drawing from this example, he suggested that a similar approach could be adopted in the future for the project area. Johnson envisioned this as an excellent opportunity to celebrate the river, the connectedness of the two communities involved, and to create a corridor that attracts residents, visitors, and businesses.

A member reflected on the desired outcomes of the project, emphasizing the hope that once completed, the community will genuinely be better off, not merely in terms of avoiding worsening conditions but in actual improvement. She highlighted the distinction between just minimizing damage and achieving real progress, envisioning a future where the community acknowledges and appreciates tangible improvements in all aspects that have been discussed. Additionally, she addressed the need for building a new level of trust, particularly with disenfranchised communities. She recognized the importance of this project being seen as an integrated effort, beyond just a transportation solution, to foster trust among citizens.

A member brought attention to an idea that hadn't been mentioned yet, emphasizing the importance of ease of navigation for all modes of transportation, including cars. He underscored the significance of making the highway not just functional but also user-friendly. Additionally, he discussed the concept of transforming the project area into a destination or landmark, going beyond mere accessibility. He advocated for creating a space that attracts people to spend time and enjoy themselves, a place where people actively want to visit. Highlighting innovative ideas like incorporating moss on concrete for environmental and aesthetic benefits, he appreciated the creative approach to enhancing the area's appeal. He also resonated with the idea of connecting different parts of Vancouver and organizing annual events to foster community engagement and enjoyment.

A member shared their perspective on the myriad opportunities for enhancing connectivity in the program area, particularly noting the potential benefits in the industrial zone for fostering local, well-paying jobs. This insight was a new realization for her, emphasizing the importance of simultaneously preserving housing affordability and job availability. She highlighted the interplay between the river, land use, and the potential for strategic relocations, like the drainage district office, as an opportunity for deeper understanding and effective planning. Drawing from her personal experience living in the Columbia Corridor, she underscored the challenges of transit access and the significance of considering both jobs and housing in the project's development, rather than focusing solely on housing. This holistic approach was seen as a valuable perspective in ensuring the program's success and its positive impact on the community.

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A member humorously addressed the idea of closing the bridge for a party, suggesting instead that the bridge's multimodal nature should facilitate access to festivities on either side, without the need to close it. Emphasizing the importance of community bonding and celebration, he highlighted the potential of the bridge to enhance connectivity and ease of travel, whether it's by train or other means. He touched on the concept of wayfinding, sharing experiences from another project where navigation was challenging, and how investing in better wayfinding can significantly improve the situation. He also reflected on the hyper-local nature of discussions and their impact on community connections, emphasizing the importance of strategic planning and community engagement. Finally, he underlined the interconnectedness of various aspects like job growth, trade skills development, and housing, and the importance of considering these elements collectively to create a project that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Mayor McEnery-Ogle approached the question of the future state of the communities in the program area by identifying key sectors, including neighborhood communities, the college, the historic reserve, downtown areas, and the community of freight emerging from the port. She emphasized understanding the specific needs of each sector, such as livability, jobs and open spaces for neighborhoods, efficient port access for freight, and business vitality for downtown areas, including the waterfront. Mayor Anne highlighted the overarching theme of connectivity, expressing enthusiasm for walkability improvements and the introduction of Light Rail Transit (LRT), which promises reliable transportation across the bridge. She lightheartedly mentioned working with CBAG members who represent Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) on potentially closing the bridge for an event on Labor Day of 2025 as a way to honor the bridge.

Below are notes from each small group discussion.

The highlights from Group 1's discussion include:

- **Mobility and Accessibility:**
  - The group emphasized the necessity of ensuring public transit systems are fully accessible for individuals with disabilities, including those with blindness.
  - They advocated for considering ADA standards as a baseline rather than a limit, ensuring that all facilities are accessible to everyone, including the provision of accessible signage.
- **Decision-Making Process:**
  - The group discussed the importance of leveraging the program's investments to create significant community impacts.
  - They raised questions about how to secure funding for various aspects of the infrastructure and community development initiatives.
- **Community Benefits:**
  - The group identified the need for green spaces, parks, and housing developments, emphasizing improving the quality of life without causing displacement.
  - The importance of creating vibrant community spaces that are inclusive and cater to the needs of all residents was stressed.
  - Members highlighted the potential for mixed-use development in areas like Jantzen Beach Center and Hayden Island, focusing on creating vibrant communities.
  - The possibility of repurposing existing retail areas for community development was discussed.

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- **Workforce and Economic Opportunities:**
  - There was a focus on the importance of investing in community colleges for workforce development and training.
  - The group advocated for ensuring that minority contractors, particularly COBID firms, have opportunities in bridge construction, and for supporting small business development.
- **Avoid Further Harm:**
  - The need for sustainable development and preventing environmental damage around the bridge area was emphasized.
  - The group discussed the importance of thoughtful development that respects both community needs and environmental concerns.
- **Key Questions from Group 1:**
  - How can access to the benefits of this program be ensured for new business owners, including minority and disadvantaged businesses?
  - What strategies can be implemented to develop affordable housing and enhance transportation options for the workforce in the region?
  - How can the program support the development and training initiatives of community colleges on both sides of the river?

The highlights from Group 2's discussion include:

- **Mobility and Accessibility:**
  - The group emphasized the challenges related to accessing pedestrian and bike lanes due to their height and proposed solutions to improve accessibility, stressing the need for inclusive design.
  - They strongly advocated for the inclusion of an elevator in the bridge design to ensure accessibility for all users, thereby addressing concerns of ableism.
- **Physical Design:**
  - The group recognized the potential for improvement on Southeast 5th, considering the reconfiguration of this area under the bridge to enhance its usability for the community.
- **Decision-Making Process:**
  - The group expressed concerns about the current decision-making process, emphasizing the need for greater community input and the inclusion of non-car users in these discussions.
  - They stressed the importance of considering the transit needs of BIPOC workers who reside farther away, advocating for inclusive transit planning.
- **Community Benefits:**
  - The group explored opportunities around the Vancouver side, particularly emphasizing the residential aspect to preserve jobs and housing in the program areas, recognizing the benefits of such development.
  - They discussed the potential for community involvement and development in areas like Rose Village, highlighting the importance of local community engagement.
- **Workforce and Economic Opportunities:**
  - The group recommended prioritizing transit planning for those living 5-10 miles away to preserve jobs in the area, underlining the importance of workforce considerations in transit decisions.
- **Key Questions from Group 2:**

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- How can Southeast 5th under the bridge be reconfigured to enhance its usability for the community?
- What measures can be implemented to make pedestrian and bike lanes more accessible for everyone, including those with disabilities?
- How can the decision-making process be made more inclusive, ensuring community involvement and considering the needs of non-car users and BIPOC workers residing farther away?

The highlights from Group 3's discussion include:

- **Mobility and Accessibility:**
  - The group emphasized the need for robust transportation solutions that foster easy and intuitive mobility, with an emphasis on safe options for all users.
  - They discussed enhancing East/West connections and transforming the freeway from a barrier to a community connector, improving overall accessibility.
- **Decision-Making Process:**
  - Group 3 stressed the importance of engaging with diverse perspectives and learning from communities first in the decision-making process.
  - They acknowledged that the program might be met with suspicion and lack of trust, emphasizing the need to anticipate and address these challenges proactively.
- **Community Benefits:**
  - The vision for the project was described as one that attracts residents and visitors alike, with a focus on thriving communities and walkability.
  - Group 3 also envisioned creating a positive legacy through the project, potentially including bridge-centered events to promote community and connectivity.
- **Workforce and Economic Opportunities:**
  - Discussion focused on leveraging educational institutions for job creation and workforce development.
  - The group aimed for economic prosperity that translates to the household level, advocating for more prosperous and resilient communities.
- **Avoid Further Harm:**
  - Concerns were raised about the potential for projects like this to inadvertently harm the communities they aim to help, particularly through gentrification.
  - The group emphasized the importance of learning from past mistakes, such as those in Albina, and ensuring right-of-way practices do not create new harm.
- **Physical Design:**
  - The aesthetics of downtown Vancouver and its connectivity were highlighted, with a focus on making the area more attractive and accessible.
  - The group stressed the importance of honoring the Columbia River in the design choices and enhancing the physical design to support urban growth and community pride.
- **Group 3's key questions:**
  - How can downtown Vancouver's livability and economic empowerment be enhanced while preserving community connectivity and ensuring the sustainability of local businesses?
  - What approaches can the project take to foster inclusive and trustworthy decision-making processes, particularly focusing on community engagement and learning from historical contexts?

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- In what ways can the physical design of the project prioritize accessibility, safety, and aesthetics, especially in relation to enhancing community connections and honoring the cultural significance of areas like the Columbia River?

The highlights from Group 4's discussion include:

- **Mobility and Accessibility:**
  - The group discussed creating accessible spaces that enable people to thrive, emphasizing the importance of multimodal transportation that is easy to use for families, people with disabilities, and alternative commuters.
  - They advocated for interconnected greenways and trails connecting downtowns for cyclists, bikers, and walkers.
- **Decision-Making Process:**
  - Emphasis was placed on using Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) as tools to advance economic opportunities and track outcomes for priority populations.
  - The group stressed the need for thoughtful decision-making to avoid repeating historical mistakes, particularly in addressing houselessness and displacement issues.
- **Community Benefits:**
  - The idea of greening the bridge was explored, such as using moss on concrete to absorb noise and air pollution and prevent graffiti.
  - The group highlighted the importance of not displacing houseless individuals and ensuring equitable treatment in relocation processes.
- **Workforce and Economic Opportunities:**
  - There was a focus on ensuring that a significant amount of wages from the bridge work are earned by historically underrepresented local communities, including both contractors and workers.
  - The group discussed providing educational opportunities and pipelines, such as apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, and giving opportunities to previously incarcerated individuals.
- **Avoid Further Harm:**
  - Concerns were raised about not repeating past mistakes of displacement, particularly referencing the treatment of indigenous populations and Japanese internment.
  - The group advocated for dispersing housing across both sides of the river, avoiding concentration in a single low-income housing facility.
- **Physical Design:**
  - Ideas were shared about enhancing the physical design of the bridge and surrounding areas with environmental and aesthetic considerations, including greening initiatives.
- **Group 4's key questions:**
  - How can we ensure that the project creates accessible and thriving spaces for all community members, particularly through multimodal transportation?
  - What strategies can be implemented to green the bridge and surrounding areas, enhancing environmental and aesthetic values? How can the project provide significant workforce and economic opportunities for historically underrepresented communities, including educational pathways and fair wage distribution?

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## NEXT STEPS

The co-facilitator provided a brief overview of the workplan for the next six meetings of the CBAG:

- December 2023: Potential CBAG Framework Elements
- January 2024: Final recommendations on the first group of framework elements
- February 2024: Framework elements related to Mobility and Accessibility
- March 2024: Framework elements related to Community Benefits
- April 2024: Framework elements related to Avoiding Further Harm
- May 2024: Framework elements related to Physical Design

## CLOSING REMARKS

Johnson concluded the meeting by remarking on the high level of energy and engagement displayed during the visioning exercise, labeling it as tremendously successful and indicative of the group's commitment to the program. Expressing gratitude to everyone for their contributions and enthusiasm, he also lightheartedly acknowledged the party idea that was discussed. With a forward-looking note, Johnson lightheartedly referenced the idea of a 2025 event, and as the meeting ended, he wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

## NEXT PROGRAM MEETINGS:

- Equity Advisory Group (CAG) – November 20, 2023 – 5:30-7:30 PM
- Community Benefits Advisory Group (CBAG) – December 14, 2023 – 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- Community Advisory Group (CAG) – December 14, 2023 – 4:00-6:00 PM

## PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no written public comment that had been shared with CBAG members prior to the meeting and no live public comment was shared during the meeting.

## ATTENDEES

Attendees	Organization
<b>CBAG Members</b>	
Mingus Mapps	City of Portland Commissioner
Anne McEnerly-Ogle	City of Vancouver Mayor
Kelly Haines	Worksystems, Inc
Scott McCallum	WA School for the Blind
Peter Fels	Alliance for Community Engagement

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Attendees	Organization
Vicki Nakashima	Equity Advisory Group Representative
Michael Strahs	Kimco
Corky Collier	Columbia Corridor Association
Holly Williams	Community at large
Marcus Mundy	Coalition for Communities of Color
Carley Francis	WSDOT
Rian Windsheimer	ODOT
Nicole Davison León	Portland Hispanic Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce
Jayne Haygood	Vancouver’s Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

Attendees	Organization
<b>IBR Staff</b>	
Greg Johnson	Program Administrator
Raymond Mabey	Assistant Program Administrator
Frank Green	Assistant Program Administrator
Johnell Bell	Principal Equity Officer
Shannon Singleton	Community Benefits Lead
Jake Warr	IBR Equity Team
Emilee Thomas	IBR Equity Team
Eric Trinh	IBR Equity Team
Salomé Chimuku	IBR CE Team
Fabiola Casas	IBR CE Team
Fabián Hidalgo Guerrero	IBR CE Team
Zander Arnold	Technical Support
Mara Enciu Garrett	Technical Support

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## Additional Participants

32 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=12km96u3nog&embeds\\_referring\\_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.interstatebridge.org%2F&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12km96u3nog&embeds_referring_euri=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.interstatebridge.org%2F&feature=emb_logo)

### Meeting Materials

The meeting materials are available here: <https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/cbag-meeting-november-16-2023/>