

COMMUNITY BENEFITS ADVISORY GROUP (CBAG)

MEETING SUMMARY #11

Date and Time: Thursday, July 25, 2024 / 9:30 – 11:30 am

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

Number of concurrent YouTube viewers: 11

OUTCOMES

- CBAG members learned about the third-party Health Analysis being conducted and provided feedback on health topics to consider
- CBAG members brainstormed and discussed potential community benefits recommendations related to the Physical Design category.

WELCOME

Shannon Singleton, Community Benefits Lead, opened the July 2024 CBAG meeting.

Emilee Thomas-Peralta, Co-facilitator, reviewed instructions to access closed captioning, meeting participation tips, ASL interpretation reminders, public input instructions, IBR office safety procedure and CBAG agreements.

Frank Green, Assistant Program Administrator, welcomed new member, Siobhana McEwen, Southwest Washington Equity Coalition (SWEC), to the CBAG and thanked Jasmine Tolbert, SWEC, for her service and input.

City of Vancouver Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle and City of Portland Commissioner Mingus Mapps extended a warm welcome to everyone.

Thomas-Peralta asked members to share their names, organizational affiliation or at-large status, and pronouns if they wished. She added a check-in question by asking each participant, 'If you could live somewhere for one month with your expenses paid, where would you go?'

PUBLIC COMMENT

Thomas-Peralta explained how to provide public comments. One written public comment was received before the meeting and included in the meeting packet. No members of the public provided comments during the meeting. Thomas-Peralta then outlined the options for submitting comments after the meeting.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Assistant Program Administrator Green shared the following program updates:

- **Federal Highway Administration’s Bridge Investment Program (BIP) Grant** (July 12): The program received \$1.499 billion from the federal Bridge Investment Program, as announced by Washington state's congressional delegation. This funding, combined with the \$600 million from the federal Mega grant program received six months ago, brings the total federal investment to approximately \$2.1 billion. This significant milestone represents the second major federal grant awarded to the program.
- **Tours:**
 - **Walking Tour** (July 10): The program participated in a walking tour hosted by Oregon Walks, The Street Trust, and Cycle Vancouver.
 - **Bridge Tours** (July 11, 18, and 24): The program hosted three Bridge Tours on July 11, 18, and 24, attended by several IBR advisory group members. These tours showcased the challenges of the 107-year-old Interstate 5 Bridge, and how the Modified Locally Preferred Alternative addresses these issues. After the tours, attendees joined a social hour to network and discuss the IBR program. These tours provided valuable engagement and insights from advisory group members.
- **Community Engagement:**
 - The program is engaging with the community through presentations and summer tabling events to inform the public, gather feedback, and raise awareness. These activities keep the community updated on the program's progress and provide opportunities for direct interaction and information sharing.
 - **Recent Presentations:**
 - Hough Neighborhood Association (July 18)
 - Urban Forestry Commission (July 17)
 - Downtown Redevelopment Authority (July 18)
 - Planning Commission (July 23)
 - **Summer Tabling Events:**
 - Saturday in the Park (Vancouver Pride) (July 13)
 - Mississippi Street Fair (July 13)
- **Industry Outreach:**
 - **Association of Women & Minority Businesses** (July 10): Program Administrator Greg Johnson attended the Association of Women & Minority Businesses meeting and presented updates on construction packages, the delivery plan, and future opportunities. He provided links to procurement pages for attendees. The audience had questions about the program, youth internships, apprenticeships and accountability. There was also interest in assistance for

workers laid off because of project labor agreements, which Johnson said is being addressed through partnerships and workforce groups.

Questions and comments from CBAG Members:

CBAG Member: How close are we to determining the final cost of the project?

Green: The program initially estimated a cost range between \$5 and \$7.5 billion, targeting around \$6 billion. While the recent grants bring significant funding, there is still work to do to refine the design and publish the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS). Updated cost estimates will be available early next year after further design decisions are made, such as the bridge type and structure.

CBAG Member: What are the plans for public outreach and community engagement?

Green: The program continues to conduct presentations to neighborhood associations and participate in summer events for direct public engagement. Upcoming efforts include publishing the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) this fall, with plans to avoid the holiday period for public comments. The team is working closely with federal partners to finalize and announce a publication date soon.

CBAG Member: In addition, the program plans to ensure that public comments are well-coordinated by providing a 30-day advance notice before the comment period begins. Once the legal review is concluded and signatures are obtained, the program will have clarity on the publication date, which will be an additional 30 days before it is published. This allows for a 30-day period to take necessary action and ensure everything is in place before the public comment period starts. Although the timeline is tight, there is some flexibility to establish a specific date for the publication and comment period.

PRESENTATION ON HEALTH ANALYSIS

Chris Regan, IBR Environmental Manager, shared that the program is committed to addressing health impacts through a climate and equity lens. The goal is to avoid harm to the environment and human health, especially for equity-priority communities near the corridor. Key focus areas include safety, climate needs, and sustainable workforce planning. The Draft SEIS examines air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and noise and vibration impacts. The program has partnered with the Washington Department of Health (DOH) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to evaluate potential health impacts, ensuring the program meets health standards.

Alyssa Shaw, Environmental Health Assessment Team Lead, and Anna Caudill, Environmental Health Evaluation Specialist, at the Washington State DOH, shared that their team is analyzing the health impacts of the built environment, including roads, bridges and neighborhoods. This work is part of a collaborative effort with the OHA, Clark County Public Health, Multnomah County Health Department and the Cowlitz Indian

Tribe. Their independent health analysis, focused on factors like air quality, climate, noise, and social determinants of health, will be submitted as a public comment to the Draft SEIS.

The health impact analysis evaluates the potential health effects of the project using both qualitative and quantitative data. The analysis embeds health equity and environmental justice throughout, addressing disparities such as higher heat indexes in communities of color due to less tree canopy. The team seeks feedback on health concerns from the community to ensure the project's health impacts are thoroughly assessed and mitigated.

Questions and Comments from CBAG Members:

CBAG Member: I am concerned about diesel particulates and overall air quality in the Portland area due to traffic, and I question the robustness of the baseline data collected for current and future assessments. Diesel particulates and air quality in general are key topics I would like to see addressed.

CBAG Member: People are very concerned about the possibility of a lift bridge, which currently results in 300 lifts per year, half for maintenance. Even with reduced maintenance, 150 lifts would still cause significant idling and traffic jams, posing a health issue. Other jurisdictions have stricter limitations on lift times to avoid traffic jams, but our current limitations are minimal.

CBAG Member: Can you use data from the old Columbia River Crossing (CRC) Project and its environmental justice work? We lack good air quality monitors near I-5 and have been asking for them for over 20 years. Without these monitors, we can't properly evaluate current air quality, or the impact of contaminants released during construction.

CBAG Member: The Department of Ecology is asking where to place additional air quality monitors in Vancouver. Environmental groups suggest placing them near freeways and in Fruit Valley, especially by the railroad. I encourage the health departments to cooperate with Ecology on this. We should measure not just particulates but also chemicals like benzene from exhaust. Additionally, if there are lifts or blockages, we could use electronic signboards to encourage drivers to turn off their engines instead of idling.

CBAG Member: Concerns about noise and air quality during construction are significant. Additionally, traffic safety is a major concern, highlighted by recent crashes that caused significant delays.

CBAG Member: Concerns often arise about access to mass transit. A 40-minute bus ride to the grocery store impacts not only access to food but also mental health. As we discuss health, it's important to consider the whole health concept, including mental health impacts of navigating large transit areas, especially for those living near freeways.

Singleton: I think there was some conversation about this with the Equity Advisory Group, and we are hearing similar feedback regarding mental health.

Shaw: We are sharing a survey that consists of the four questions we had on the [July 2024 CBAG presentation slide deck](#). We value all feedback and will update you about the survey soon. If you have additional feedback or questions about our analysis and methods, feel free to reach out to me and Anna. We are happy to connect.

Regan: From the program side, we are happy to respond to the comments received today. We aim to provide feedback and ensure we are addressing concerns correctly. We have good responses that could help the conversation, and we appreciate the opportunity to address these comments at the right time.

PRESENTATION ON EXAMPLES OF POTENTIAL COMMUNITY BENEFITS IN THE PHYSICAL DESIGN CATEGORY

Thomas-Peralta presented examples of potential community benefits within the category of physical design. The objective is to integrate equity, history, and culture into the program's physical design elements, including bridge aesthetics, artwork, amenities, and impacts to adjacent land uses. Thomas-Peralta emphasized that CBAG is still in the brainstorming phase and encouraged members to propose all creative ideas. Examples of potential community benefits include:

- Create connectivity to Fort Vancouver as part of the bridge's design.
- Include rich landscaping of native plants and flowers that will both beautify the space and make it a desirable destination.

Singleton then broke the meeting into small groups to further brainstorm and discuss the Physical Design category.

LARGE GROUP REPORT

Singleton welcomed members back to the large group setting and asked each group to report out from their small group discussions.

Report-outs included:

- Maintaining scenic views and adding educational features, such as keeping the view of Mount Hood unobstructed and including signs about local vegetation and a community garden.
- Enhancing the bridge's aesthetics with creative lighting, digital displays and other design elements to reflect a unique sense of place.
- Incorporating cultural representations and art by involving local communities and integrating art, history and culture into the design.
- Integrating climate resiliency and creating green spaces that support the local ecosystem.

Notes from small group discussions:

- Ensure early integration of aesthetics into the bridge design by securing buy-in from elected officials and allocating budget early.
- Consider functionality in the design to create a space that builds community and connection.
- Prioritize climate resilience and ecological protection in the bridge design to protect the surrounding natural environment and animals during construction.

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- Consider the inclusion of additional connectors such as Fourth Plain Boulevard, 23rd Avenue, and 49th Avenue to ensure all areas connected.
- Work with local communities to incorporate murals that honor local and cultural history in the bridge design.
- Incorporate desirable design elements in a consistent manner throughout the program area, such as textured acoustic walls and articulated bridge columns, ensuring both large- and small-scale aesthetic and functional details.
- Expand the bridge's bike and pedestrian paths and install barriers to separate them from vehicular traffic, enhancing both safety and noise reduction, and ensuring there are wind barriers or features to reduce exposure to vehicle exhaust.
- Incorporate educational information near the waterfront about local vegetation and add identifying markers for native plants.
- Create a community garden near the waterfront as part of the bridge design to serve as a resource for local residents.
- Incorporate advanced signage on the bridge, including digital displays along the shared-use path displaying relevant information and real-time updates, and enhancing the sense of place.
- Consider ecological impacts when developing lighting designs.
- Install well-designed, concealable garbage cans to maintain the bridge’s cleanliness and aesthetic appeal.

CLOSING REMARKS

Singleton transitioned to the next segment, informing members about upcoming CBAG and program meetings.

Green commended the members for their hard work and dedication to community benefits.

ATTENDEES

Attendees	Organization
CBAG Members	
Frank Green	Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program
Anne McEnery-Ogle	City of Vancouver Mayor
Mingus Mapp	City of Portland Commissioner
Darcy Hoffman	Workforce SW Washington
Peter Fels	Alliance for Community Engagement
Vicki Nakashima	Equity Advisory Group Representative
Michael Strahs	Kimco Realty
Corky Collier	Columbia Corridor Association

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Farleigh Winters	LSW Architects
Carley Francis	Washington State Department of Transportation
Javier Navaro	Southwest Washington Chapter of LULAC
Tom Hickey	Community Advisory Group Representative
Walter Valenta	At-large Community Member
Jayne Haygood	Vancouver’s Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
Holly Willams	At-large Community Member
Steve Barnett	Representative for the Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Siobhana R. McEwen	Southwest Washington Equity Coalition (SWEC)

Attendees	Role
IBR Staff	
Aidan Gronauer	Assistant Director of Equity and Civil Rights
Shannon Singleton	Community Benefits Lead
Emilee Thomas-Peralta	Equity Team
Eric Trinh	Equity Team
Grace Crunican	Executive Advisor
Chris Regan	Environmental Manager
Steve Katko	Design Lead
Steve Witter	Transit Team
Brenda Siragusa	Equity Team
Jeannet Santiago	Equity Team
Salome Chimuku	Equity Team
Fabiola Casas	Equity Team
Fabián Hidalgo Guerrero	Community Engagement Team
Lucy Hamer	Equity Team
Paris Moore	Equity Team
Monika Johnson	Equity Team
Shanrika McClain	Equity Team
Amber McGarvey	Program Development Coordinator
Amelia Ulsh	Technical Support

Additional Participants

Online viewing is open to the public, partner agency staff, and IBR team members. Eleven participants viewed the meeting via the YouTube livestream during the meeting.

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MEETING RECORDING AND MATERIALS

Meeting Recording

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WZ7OApzIM>

Meeting Materials

The meeting materials are available here: <https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/cbag-meeting-july-25-2024/>