

COMMUNITY BENEFITS ADVISORY GROUP (CBAG)

MEETING SUMMARY #15

Date and Time: Thursday, Nov. 14, 2024 / 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

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

Number of concurrent YouTube viewers: 12

OUTCOMES

- CBAG members used modified consensus to confirm potential community benefit recommendations from the Avoid Further Harm and Mobility & Accessibility categories (Tranche 2).
- CBAG members began the review and refinement of potential community benefits in the Mobility & Accessibility and Physical Design categories (Tranche 3).

WELCOME

Bree Nicoletto, co-facilitator, opened the November 2024 CBAG meeting. She then reviewed instructions to access closed captioning, meeting participation tips, sign language interpretation reminders, public input instructions and group agreements.

Greg Johnson, program administrator, welcomed attendees and thanked them for their participation.

Nicoletto and Emilee Thomas-Peralta, equity team members and co-facilitator, led a round of introductions by asking members to share their names, organizational affiliation or at-large status and pronouns if they wished. Members also answered a check-in question, "What's the last thing you recommended to someone?" as part of their introductions.

Nicoletto then provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nicoletto shared information on how to submit official public comment on the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) and then outlined the process for submitting public comments during and after the meeting. No written comments were submitted prior to the meeting and no members of the public provided comments during the meeting.

PROGRAM UPDATES

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Administrator Johnson thanked Shannon Singleton, community benefits lead, for her dedication and leadership with the committee, noting her transition to Multnomah County Commissioner. He shared appreciation for her contributions and wished her well.

Johnson referenced the recent election and affirmed that the program will continue as planned. He noted that the public comment period for the Draft (SEIS) ends Monday, Nov. 18, with 1,700 comments received so far. He clarified that concerns about induced demand and a tunnel option have been addressed and encouraged all feedback.

Johnson then shared the following program updates:

- Section 106 public comment period: The 30-day public comment period for Section 106 runs from Oct. 18 to Nov. 18, 2024. Information can be accessed through the online open house at the [IBR Cultural Resources and Section 106 webpage](#).
- Draft SEIS public hearings and open houses: The team held two virtual public hearings to gather public comment on the Draft SEIS.
 - Vancouver (Oct. 28): Over 120 attendees participated, with high engagement and energy throughout the open house/public hearing.
 - Portland Expo Center (Oct. 30): Approximately 80 individuals attended, including many from Hayden Island, and participants expressed their concerns and hopes for the program.
- Community event tabling: The team participated in the Vancouver Farmers Market to raise awareness and gather feedback.
- Program tour: The program hosted a tour for a metro councilor, discussing key topics such as the health impact assessment and minority business involvement in the project. The councilor gave positive feedback and support for the IBR program.
- Recent presentations: The program delivered presentations to various community organizations, neighborhood associations, transportation boards and professional groups across the region.

Johnson continued his updates with information on how to access the Draft SEIS. The Executive Summary has been translated into multiple languages to ensure accessibility and availability on the [IBR website](#). Physical copies are available at several locations including Vancouver City Hall, Vancouver Community Library, Charles Jordan Community Center and the Portland Building. The document is also available online, with comments accepted through the website, email, regular mail or by phone at (866) 427-7347. Johnson emphasized the importance of submitting official comments through approved channels, such as the website or email, and noted that comments must directly reference the Draft SEIS content to be included in the public record. Social media posts or comments containing hyperlinks will not be considered.

CONFIRM COMMUNITY BENEFITS IN THE AVOID FURTHER HARM AND MOBILITY & ACCESSIBILITY CATEGORIES – TRANCHE 2

Thomas-Peralta provided context for the discussion, explaining that the recommendations were refined through multiple review sessions with the CBAG and informed by input from the [Community Advisory Group](#)

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(CAG) and [Equity Advisory Group](#) (EAG). CAG affirmed that the CBAG's recommendations aligned with the [Community Priorities and Values](#) and EAG affirmed alignment with the [Equity Framework](#). The EAG also suggested a consideration of desired outcomes for each proposed community benefit as part of the process of refining the recommendations.

Thomas-Peralta explained that the CBAG reviewed Tranche 2 in September and October's meetings. Today's discussion focused on these recommendations, which could potentially be included in the Final SEIS. She also noted that Tranche 3 is the next set for review, and they may begin that discussion today, time permitting.

Thomas-Peralta explained that she would read through the list of Tranche 2 potential community benefits, noting any language changes based on previous discussions. After reviewing the list of recommendations, Singleton would guide the group through the modified consensus decision-making process.

Avoid Further Harm (AFH):

Thomas-Peralta read aloud the recommendations in the Avoid Further Harm category, noting that the recommendation to identify funds for direct impact mitigations was broadened into a heading that now covers items AFH-20 to 22, grouping related recommendations based on previous CBAG discussions.

- AFH-13: Have collaborative conversations with landowners and consulting tribes to maintain access to the river for Native communities throughout construction, with a focus on Native communities defining what access means to them.
- AFH-14: Develop a proactive communication plan for before and during construction to keep the public informed of potential impacts such as noise, route closures, other mobility impacts, etc.
 - To include communication for transit/mobility impacts as soon as possible, as well as messaging to homeless service providers

Establish a comprehensive process for community members to voice concerns and report negative impacts, potentially including an online platform and/or hotline where community members can report issues and receive timely responses, ensuring a commitment to responsiveness and due diligence to reach resolution. Consider exploring the use of AI.

- AH-15: Increase public transit services and explore alternative routes to mitigate transportation impacts to transit riders, walkers, bikers, rollers and people using mobility scooter during construction, including the implementation of shuttle buses and additional bus routes along the impacted routes in the cities of Vancouver and Portland.
- AFH-17: Explore opportunities for planting mature trees as early as possible with considerations for noise mitigation and air quality, in line with landscaping plan and permitting.
- AFH-18: In line with existing procurement policies, ensure there are opportunities for representation of equity priority communities in the RFP review process and on the review panel to avoid and address potential biases.

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- AFH-19: The real estate process, including eminent domain (which is a last resort) and outreach must include considerations for language access and culturally specific and relevant services.

Identify funds for direct impact mitigations resulting from construction:

- AFH-20: Require contractors to perform foundation inspections/videos on specific properties (as defined by each specific work activity) prior to construction to establish baseline conditions for determining whether any subsequent impacts are caused by IBR construction.
- AFH-21: Develop comprehensive strategies and funding options with the program and other partners that can be implemented to address the relocation and housing needs of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness affected by the program.
 - Explore partnerships and funding options with agencies providing culturally-specific services focused on equity priority communities and those who conduct street outreach and engagement for housing placement.
- AFH-22: Minimize impacts on small businesses during construction to avoid extended closures.

Singleton reminded members that they were using the Fist to Five modified consensus decision-making model. This model involves a five-point scale to gauge participants' agreement or reservations about each recommendation. The scale ranges from 0, representing a strong disagreement or a need for further discussion, to 5, indicating enthusiastic agreement. The points on the scale are:

- Fist - Strong disagreement or a 'no-win' feeling.
- One finger – Hold on, we need to talk about this.
- Two fingers – I have reservation, but I could be convinced.
- Three fingers – I guess I'm okay with it.
- Four fingers – Sounds good.
- Five fingers – Love it

Singleton explained that if participants voted with a fist, 1, or 2, they could share their concerns so they can be documented in the record. While these votes won't block the recommendations if others vote 3 or higher, the concerns will still be included so they can be considered as part of the program leadership's decision-making process.

CBAG members discussed clarifying which recommendations belong to Tranches 2, 3 and 4. For AFH-20, they agreed to change the language from "foundation" to "structural" to ensure inclusivity of other elements like chimneys and windows. Regarding AFH-13, members noted that "maintain access" was unclear, given that current tribal access doesn't exist in the bridge footprint. Singleton stated that the recommendation would guide the program to consider tribal access as the program progresses.

Singleton recapped the additional recommendation for AFH-13, noting the edit to change the language from "foundation" to "structural." She then moved CBAG members through the modified consensus decision

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making process, with most members voting 3 or 4, and affirmed that the recommendations would move forward based on these results.

Singleton reminded the group that after recommendations are confirmed they are presented to the Executive Steering Group (ESG) before being forwarded to the program as part of the final list of CBAG recommendations.

Mobility & Accessibility

Thomas-Peralta then moved on to read the potential benefits in the Mobility and Accessibility category, which included:

- MA-11: Conduct a comparative analysis of program areas to optimize traffic flow and accessibility.
- MA-12: Design team to consider providing adequate shelter for all weather conditions at transit stations including rain, wind and heat. Special considerations should be made for the unique needs of the elevated transit station.
- MA-13: Consider safety when determining locations for public restrooms near transit stations.
- MA-14: Design team to consider incorporation of drought-resistant, naturalized landscaping at public transit locations.
- MA-15: Consider maintenance, safety, active management and future-proofing in the design aspects of the multi-use paths throughout the program area.
- MA-16: Develop robust trail systems that surpass federal requirements, leveraging creative solutions to increase functionality and community value, and responsive to the community's needs and input.
- MA-20: Incorporate innovative solutions to exceed ADA requirements, enhancing accessibility and mobility thoughtfully.
- MA-27: Expand the bridge's bike and pedestrian paths and install barriers to separate them from vehicular traffic, enhancing both safety and noise reduction.

After Thomas-Peralta read through the list, members discussed specific accessibility considerations such as elevators, and mitigating the potential of ice on ramps. They emphasized the importance of separating multimodal paths from traffic and ensuring design suitability for different types of multimodal path users. A member recommended including both "native and naturalized" landscaping, while another highlighted the need to optimize traffic flow using the [Safe System Approach](#). Additionally, a suggestion was made to include a specific reference to the "City of Vancouver" in MA-16, particularly regarding the new route from Main Street to the old apple tree to ensure clarity in the connection with the city.

Singleton recapped the requested changes and feedback from the discussion, which included:

- MA-11: Adding language related to the Safe System Approach.

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- MA-12: Adding in “ice” to the list of weather conditions.
- MA-16: Including a reference to "City of Vancouver."
- MA-20: Add specific language referencing accessibility features like elevators for different mobility devices.
- MA-27: Detailing features of multimodal paths, including listing modes like transit riders, walkers, bikers, rollers, scooters and ensuring a clear separation between these types of users. The design team is encouraged to consult with multimodal users as well as members of the disability community as the design progresses, ensuring that the accessibility needs of all user groups are met.
- The program to explore options for providing visuals to illustrate what it would be like to travel on multimodal paths.

Singleton then moved the CBAG through modified consensus decision making, with most members voting 3 or 4, affirming that the recommendations would move forward. One member who voted with a 3 shared they were not fully convinced due to difficulty visualizing the paths and reiterated the need for clearer visual representations.

REVIEW/REFINE POTENTIAL COMMUNITY BENEFITS IN THE MOBILITY & ACCESSIBILITY AND PHYSICAL DESIGN CATEGORIES (TRANCHE 3)

After completing decision making for Tranche 2, Thomas-Peralta transitioned the meeting to the review and refinement of potential community benefits in the Mobility & Accessibility and Physical Design categories – Tranche 3.

Mobility & Accessibility (MA) – 19: Explore creative solutions to ensure accessibility in the tight space from Terminal 1 to the trail, potentially including an elevator.

Members discussed creative solutions for ensuring accessibility in the connections from the multimodal trail to transit stations at the elevated station and Hayden Island. They suggested incorporating multiple options, such as stairs, ramps and an elevator to accommodate users of all mobility levels and ensure ease of access. There was also a request to add language about the bridge's height to clearly communicate the scope of the accessibility challenge. Additionally, a recommendation was made to remove the term "potentially" to convey a more definitive commitment to these solutions.

MA – 24: Enhance bike trail connectivity to the 40-mile loop and existing trails at the North Portland Marine Drive interchange.

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The group discussed the need for direct connection between multimodal paths and light rail stations, supporting mixed-mode trips like biking to a station and using light rail. They emphasized making trails intuitive to improve user experience and including a reference to the City of Vancouver (CoV) waterfront as a specific example of an important connection point. The language was adjusted to change "bike" paths to "multimodal" to ensure inclusivity for all users and travel modes. It was also suggested that CoV be added to the "potential asset connection" column.

MA – 26: Enhance safety for bicyclists and pedestrians crossing the bridge by incorporating protective features into the design, such as the railing or safety nets.

Members discussed enhancing safety for users of all mobility modes by incorporating general protective features, removing specific mentions like "railings or safety nets." The suggestions included addressing fall risks, adding lighting, ensuring weather protection and providing potential rest stops or shade areas to enhance user comfort. The group also highlighted the importance of emergency preparedness, including call boxes for medical or safety emergencies and measures for suicide prevention.

Additionally, there was a suggestion to create a new header "Over-River Trail Accessibility and Connectivity," under which MA-19, MA-24, and MA-26 will be grouped.

CLOSING REMARKS

Nicolello transitioned to the next agenda item, informing members about upcoming CBAG and program meetings.

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

ATTENDEES

Attendees	Organization
CBAG Members	
Greg Johnson	IBR Program Administrator
Rian Windsheimer	Oregon Department of Transportation
Anne McEnery-Ogle	City of Vancouver
Priya Dhanapal	Deputy City Administrator, City of Portland
Steve Barnett	Representative for the Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Scott McCallum	Washington State School for the Blind
Peter Fels	Alliance for Community Engagement
Jayne Haygood	Vancouver Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
Vicki Nakashima	Equity Advisory Group (EAG) Representative
Walter Valenta	At-large Community Member
Holly Williams	At-large Community Member

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Michael Strahs	Kimco Realty
Farleigh Winters	LSW Architects
Carley Francis	Washington State Department of Transportation
Siobhana R. McEwen	Southwest Washington Equity Coalition (SWEC)
Nate McCoy	National Association of Minority Contractors (NAMC) Oregon

Attendees	Role
IBR Staff	
Paige Schlupp	Assistant Program Administrator
Aidan Gronauer	Assistant Director of Civil Rights & Equity
Shannon Singleton	Community Benefits Lead
Emilee Thomas-Peralta	Equity Team
Bree Nicoletto	Community Engagement Team
Eric Trinh	Equity Team
Steve Katko	Design Team Lead
Brenda Siragusa	Equity Team
Amanda Hart	Technical Support

Other Attendees	Organization/Agency
Michelle Giguere	Kimco Realty
Katherine Kelly	City of Vancouver
Brenda Martin	City of Portland
Shawnea Posey	City of Portland
Guy Benn	TriMet

Additional Participants

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

MEETING RECORDING AND MATERIALS

Meeting Recording

[Community Benefits Advisory Group \(CBAG\) November 14, 2024, 9:30AM PST \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

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Meeting Materials

The meeting materials are available here: [CBAG Meeting November 14, 2024 | Interstate Bridge Replacement Program](#)