

MEETING SUMMARY

Subject: Community Advisory Group (CAG) Meeting #41

Date and Time: Thursday, Dec. 12, 2024, 4 – 6 p.m.

Location: Zoom Meeting and YouTube Livestream

Number of Concurrent YouTube viewers: 11

OUTCOMES

- Receive an update on recent Program activities.
- Receive an update on and ask questions about the Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee's work that has occurred since their presentation to CAG in June.
- Discuss Community Benefits Advisory Group (CBAG) recommendations for the Mobility and Accessibility and Physical Design categories. Provide feedback to refine these recommendations.

WELCOME & PROGRAM UPDATE

Lisa Keohokalole Schauer, CAG co-facilitator, opened the meeting with introductory comments. She welcomed Ed Washington and Lynn Valenter, CAG co-chairs. Valenter then welcomed everyone and invited members of the group to introduce themselves.

Greg Johnson, Program Administrator for the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program, provided an update on the progress of the IBR Program. He shared that the Program has concluded the 60-day public comment period, receiving over 3,000 comment submissions. The team is reviewing the feedback and will issue a report on the comments received. Johnson stated the Program remains on track to reach a Record of Decision by late 2025, with construction expected to begin by late 2025 and early 2026. He emphasized the importance of maintaining engagement with the new federal administration and communicating the Program's significance to the regional economy.

During the Q&A session, CAG members asked about potential impacts of federal funding cuts under the new administration and how the Program plans to address such challenges. Johnson reassured members that federal grants had been sustained through previous changes in administration. He also said the team is actively scenario-planning to mitigate potential funding gaps. He highlighted the importance of demonstrating the Program's critical value to the region and the nation. A follow-up question addressed a media report about the estimate of projected operational costs for the light rail component, to which Johnson explained that the \$21.8 million figure was an inflated, year-of-opening estimate and that the actual cost to C-TRAN would be much lower.

TOLLING UPDATE

Meghan Hodges, IBR Community and Government Relations Manager, provided an overview of the tolling process for the IBR Program. She explained the level three traffic and revenue analysis that is required to support the toll rate setting by the Transportation Commissions in Oregon and Washington. Hodges recapped the work of the Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee, including the considerations they have identified for toll rates and policies, such as safe and efficient mobility, equity, environmental quality and economic vitality. Hodges reviewed the

Dec. 12, 2024

feedback the CAG provided in June, which included support for a consistent toll rate before and after construction, and feedback provided that paying a toll would cause travelers to rethink how they make their trip. The Equity Advisory Group provided similar feedback, also highlighting the need for a low-income toll program. Hodges then presented four toll rate scenarios that are being analyzed, detailing the pre-completion and post-completion toll rates, truck toll multipliers and the assumption of a low-income toll program in all scenarios.

During the Q&A session, CAG members asked about the proposed toll rates and their implications. A CAG member raised concerns about truck toll rates compared to passenger vehicles, questioning whether the proposed multipliers align with Oregon's constitutional requirements; Hodges noted that the team is exploring options to address this issue. The potential for tribal discounts or exemptions was discussed, with Hodges explaining that the Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee is analyzing these options in its traffic and revenue analysis. Members also sought clarification on the flexibility of toll rates, asking whether adjustments could be made if Program costs exceed estimates. Hodges and Johnson responded that toll rates are designed to meet funding needs but must also balance affordability and avoid traffic diversion.

CBAG RECOMMENDATIONS:

Emilee Thomas-Peralta, IBR Equity Team, presented the recommendations for the Mobility and Accessibility and Physical Design categories within IBR program’s community benefits. The recommendations included enhancing multimodal connectivity, improving safety for multimodal users, integrating acoustic enhancements for visually impaired individuals, providing amenities like shelters and bathrooms along the multimodal path and creating additional connectors and community spaces. The session concluded with discussion, asking the CAG members if, from their perspective, the recommendations presented align with the CAG Community Values and Priorities.

During the Q&A session, CAG members asked about the alignment and feasibility of potential community benefits recommendations. A CAG member questioned whether a proposed community garden recommendation fit within the Program’s scope, prompting Thomas-Peralta to acknowledge the need for further evaluation. A CBAG member who represents the CAG at the CBAG meetings provided context on the CBAG's process, explaining that specific ideas are refined and expanded through discussion, with the goal of reflecting community desires, even if some recommendations fall outside the Program's direct scope. Another CAG member expressed appreciation for considering the extension of the multimodal path connection from the waterfront to Evergreen, noting its importance to his community. Johnson confirmed that the team is exploring the feasibility of this connectivity.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

CAG Member Participants

Participants	Organization
Ed Washington	CAG Co-Chair

Dec. 12, 2024

Participants	Organization
Gerina Hatch	Community in Motion
Irina Phillips	At-large Community Member
Jana Jarvis	Oregon Trucking Association
Julie Doumbia	At-large Community Member
Lynn Valenter	CAG Co-Chair
Marcus Mundy	Coalition of Communities of Color
Martha Wiley	Public transit representative – Washington
Mikaela Williams	At-large Community Member
Sam Kim	At-large Community Member
Steve Barnett	Tribal Council – Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Tom Hickey	Bridgeton Neighborhood Association
Zachary Lauritzen	Oregon Walks

Facilitators and Presenters

Staff Name	Role
Greg Johnson	IBR Program Administrator
Meghan Hodges	IBR Community and Government Relations Manager
Johnell Bell	IBR CAG Co-facilitator
Lisa Keohokalole Schauer	IBR CAG Co-facilitator
Emilee Thomas-Peralta	IBR Equity Team

Additional Attendees

- Fabian Hidalgo Guerrero, CAG Lead
- Amanda Hart, IBR staff, tech support
- ASL interpreters: Andrea Medlock, Amanda Wilkes
- Close Captioner: Jamie Pellegrino

Dec. 12, 2024

MEETING RECORDING AND MATERIALS

Meeting Recording

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKEKA91g0Vk>

Meeting Materials

<https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/cag-december-12-2024-meeting/>