

EVENT SUMMARY: Active Transportation Listening Session

The Interstate Bridge Replacement program is committed to engaging in two-way conversations with the community. Listening sessions are one of the tools the program is using to have targeted discussions with community members to gain insights on specific topics. The following is a high-level summary of the feedback captured during breakout session conversations and live audience participation survey responses during the Active Transportation Listening Session held on June 8, 2021.

Sixteen community members attended the Active Transportation Listening Session. Sixty percent of participants shared they currently use active transportation to move across the Interstate Bridge to shop, dine and access resources (88%); visit friends and family (50%); commute to work (38%); and recreate (38%). All participants who do not currently use active transportation to access the Interstate Bridge indicated they would like to do so in the future. Narrow paths, poor wayfinding and unsafe conditions are common issues identified by participants. If active transportation conditions are improved, including improved access to public transit, participants shared they would likely use active transportation more often to travel through the program area. Overall, participants want to ensure active transportation options are accessible, safe and comfortable for users of all ability levels.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION QUESTION RESPONSES

1. Do you currently use active transportation (walking, biking, rolling) to move across the Interstate Bridge?

- Yes (60%)
- No (40%)

2. What is the purpose of your trip when using active transportation to access the Interstate Bridge?

- Recreation/fitness (38%)
- Shopping/dining/accessing resources (88%)
- Work commute (38%)
- Visiting friends/family (50%)
- Community building (church, cultural events, social services) (25%)
- Other (38%)

3. If you do not currently use active transportation to move across the Interstate Bridge, would you like to do so in the future?

- Yes (100%)
- No (0%)

4. If you do not currently use active transportation to move across the Interstate Bridge, but would like to do so in the future, what do you anticipate will be the purpose of your trips?

- Recreation/fitness (75%)
- Shopping/dining/accessing resources (50%)
- Work commute (25%)
- Visiting friends/family (50%)
- Community building (church, cultural events, social services) (25%)
- Other (25%)

5. On average, how many trips do you take across the Interstate Bridge using active transportation?

- Multiple trips per day (11%)
- A few trips a week (11%)
- A few trips a month (11%)
- A couple trips a year (33%)
- Never (33%)

Is this the first time you have engaged with the program?

- Yes (75%)
- No (25%)

6. How would you like to be engaged in the future?

- Host virtual or in-person events (100%)
- Use social media (33%)
- Provide access to team members (office hours) (17%)

- Seek input through surveys (50%)
- Other (17%)

7. Which of the following digital tools do you use to get program information?

- Program newsletter (86%)
- Facebook (43%)
- Instagram (14%)
- Twitter (14%)
- YouTube (43%)
- None of the above (14%)

BREAKOUT ROOM DISCUSSIONS

What is your current origin and destination when using active transportation to move through the program area? If active transportation conditions were ideal (safe, well-lit, accessible infrastructure, etc.), what is your preferred origin and destination?

- I live in Vancouver and will ride my bike to Portland. Sometimes I will drop my car off in Portland for repairs and bike back to Vancouver. I would like a wider bike path. I would bike across the Interstate Bridge more often if improvements were made.
- I reside in Vancouver (McLoughlin Heights) and ride my bike a lot. The company I work for has offices in both Vancouver and Portland, and I will bike to work one or two times per week. I also bike to Jantzen Beach for shopping fairly often.
- I use a tricycle (and walker but prefer the trike) to travel around Portland. I avoid the Interstate Bridge when alone as it is not safe for me. If it were safe, I would travel from downtown Portland to downtown Vancouver.
- There is a need for safe bike lanes and good lighting on bike paths in the program area. I don't want to be worried about getting hit by a car while biking.
- I bike from NW Portland to Hayden Island for shopping. Sometimes I will bike to Vancouver for events. Getting to access points that allow me to cross the Interstate Bridge is challenging. There is a need for better wayfinding. I would visit Hayden Island and Vancouver more often if improvements were made.

- Improvements to bike/walk paths would not affect my travel patterns, but I would appreciate a more enjoyable experience when traveling.

What is your experience using active transportation to move through North Portland? What modes do you use (walk, bike, roll, etc.)?

- Wayfinding is difficult and I experience a high-level of stress when biking through North Portland due to unsafe conditions. This experience may prevent others from using bike paths.
- I average a flat every few trips through north Portland due to glass shards on the ground.
- North Portland has always been fairly difficult for me to navigate. When I am using transit and my walker, I find it isn't very accessible in a lot of places, with broken sidewalks and lack of cutouts. When I am riding to north Portland on my trike, some parts are just really hard to access by trike from downtown. Lots of high stress routes. I used ride to the MAX so I could meet my fellow disabled cyclists at events, or to attend events by myself, but I have not attempted to do so since 2017 (I think March) because I am barred from taking my trike on the MAX because of their discriminatory anti-tricycle policy.

What is your experience using active transportation to move through Hayden Island? What modes do you use (walk, bike, roll, etc.)?

- Wayfinding could be improved.
- Hayden Island needs a main street.
- Crosswalk near gas station by old Safeway location is unsafe.
- There is a lot of traffic and two traffic lights you have to navigate.
- Common sense alternative: this proposed solution would use the existing Interstate Bridge for active transportation and public transit.

What is your experience using active transportation to move across the Interstate Bridge? What modes do you use (walk, bike, roll, etc.)?

- I used to guide people across bridge by bike to nearest MAX station. In the past, I personally traveled across the bridge up to four times per week by bike. Some tour guests would experience vertigo because of the open water view.
- It is difficult to bike across the bridge when rainy and car debris is being thrown around. Headlights can be blinding when cycling against traffic.

- Cannot have a conversation on the bridge (too loud).
- Bike child carrier gets stuck on the bridge because paths are too narrow.

What is your experience using active transportation to move through downtown Vancouver? What modes do you use (walk, bike, roll, etc.)?

- I start biking in East Vancouver and travel through Clark College, Hudson's Bay neighborhood, and Fort Vancouver before accessing the bridge. I don't go through downtown Vancouver.
- I commute by bike across the land bridge and through Fort Vancouver. This is a great biking experience. Traveling by bike through downtown Vancouver is not a bad experience.

If you do not use active transportation to move through the program area, but would like to do so in the future, what barriers do you experience preventing you from currently using active transportation?

- The grade and steepness are challenging for those with mobility issues.

Is active transportation the only mode you use when traveling, or do you link trips with other modes such as public transit or driving?

- I will drive to Portland, drop off my car at the mechanic, and bike back to Vancouver.
- I will bike to MAX stations (Delta Park or Interstate/Lombard) and use light rail to get to downtown Portland. There is a need for tricycle (and other non-bicycle transportation devices) storage on the MAX.
- Hard to find bike rack on the MAX.
- I would bike I-205 from Vancouver to Portland airport MAX station to get to work, then bike I-5 home.

We know how difficult and stressful it can be to move around the bridge corridor and across the river by walking, biking, and rolling. What are the most important places to fix?

- Bike path through Hayden Island (remove traffic lights and straighten path).
- Bike path between EXPO Center and Delta Park (straighten path).
- Cyclist once helped me move my car when it broke down on the Interstate Bridge. Unencumbered freeway access for cyclists may be a good thing for stranded motorists.
- Safe and accessible access to bike paths on the bridge is most important.

What is most important to you regarding replacing the Interstate Bridge as it relates to active transportation options? (e.g., safety, comfort, infrastructure). Tell us your vision for an ideal active transportation experience within the program area.

- Improved bike paths and signage.
- Ensure facilities are accessible to users of all abilities. People need to feel safe and comfortable when using active transportation paths on Hayden Island and into Portland. Separate bike/walk paths from cars.
- Improve safety and the bike ride across the bridge isn't too challenging for children.

If access to transit were improved, how would that change your trip?

- I would use public transit more often (travel from Vancouver to downtown Portland).
- I would use MAX more often if I was able to use with tricycle (travel across bridge and into North Portland more often).
- My wife's commute from Vancouver to Portland was so bad, she changed jobs. Now works in La Center. Having a MAX line would increase mobility of corridor.
- Access to public transit is an important back-up plan when biking through the region.

What would great active transportation look like for you? Specific areas you would fix?

- The Eastbank Esplanade is a great example of the biking experience I am seeking. It has great views, no cars, and is overall a good experience. Design the Interstate Bridge to be a similar experience.
- I would like a direct path to the bridge that is clear and straight. Not too steep. Away from cars.
- I would like a multi-use path from downtown Portland to downtown Vancouver that is separate from vehicles.
- I would like to see a covered, protected portion of the bridge as an option for active transportation. It will need appropriate lighting and security cameras. Make it a welcoming space but provide management so it doesn't become a dumping site or campground.
- Will there be access to an elevator? Interested in what that will look like.
- Need wider sidewalks.