

JOINT COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP AND EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING SUMMARY

Date and Time: Wednesday, December 17, 2025, 4:00p.m. to 6:00p.m.

Location: Zoom and YouTube Livestream

Meeting Recording: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_qNX6foaVk

Meeting Materials: <https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/joint-advisory-group-december-17-2025/>

Number of concurrent YouTube viewers: 15

OVERVIEW

The Joint Community Advisory Group (CAG) and Equity Advisory Group (EAG) meeting provided Program updates, a summary of recent community and small business outreach activities, and a presentation of findings from the advisory group assessment process. The meeting also created space for advisory group members to reflect on their experiences, share feedback, and offer recommendations for strengthening community engagement as the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program (Program) moves toward key decisions in 2026.

Key themes discussed during the meeting included:

- Appreciation for outgoing Program Administrator Greg Johnson and acknowledgement of leadership transition to Interim Program Administrator Carley Francis
- Progress toward major Program milestones, including of Coast Guard review and for environmental approvals
- Extensive community and small business outreach conducted in 2025 and the role of advisory group members in shaping engagement efforts
- Assessment findings related to advisory group attendance, retention, effectiveness, and alignment with national best practices
- Feedback from advisory group members highlighted the value of in-person engagement, clarity of advisory group roles, and the importance of community voice in upcoming phasing and prioritization decisions

One public comment was received and shared with advisory group members prior to the meeting.

WELCOME

Dr. Roberta Hunte, EAG Facilitator, and Ed Washington, CAG Co-Chair, welcomed attendees, reviewed meeting logistics, and outlined the agenda. They emphasized the importance of reflection and gratitude as the advisory groups approach a transition point in the Program's lifecycle.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Greg Johnson, outgoing Program Administrator, and Carley Francis, incoming Interim Program Administrator, provided an overview of Program status, recent activities, and upcoming milestones.

Key updates included:

- Submission of the updated Navigation Impact Report to the U.S. Coast Guard and the opening of a 30-day navigation comment period
- Anticipated Coast Guard decision on bridge height in early 2026, which will inform the Amended Record of Decision and cost estimate development
- Continued advancement of both fixed and movable span configurations through the federal environmental review process
- Ongoing monitoring of national construction market conditions, including inflation and material cost increases

The team noted that a comprehensive cost estimate update will be shared once key decisions are finalized and incorporated into the delivery schedule.

COMMUNITY AND SMALL BUSINESS OUTREACH

Hannah Williams, Community Engagement Team, presented a summary of community outreach and small business engagement conducted between May and October 2025.

Highlights included:

- Participation in 19 community tabling events across Oregon and Washington
- A total of 1,396 documented community engagements
- Workforce-focused outreach resulting in an additional 766 engagements
- Collaboration with advisory group members to identify outreach locations and events

Program staff emphasized that advisory group input directly influenced outreach strategy and event selection, strengthening trust and relevance within impacted communities.

ADVISORY GROUP FEEDBACK AND ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Lisa Keohokalole Schauer, CAG Facilitator, Megan Elliott, Public Affairs Team, and Fabiola Casas, Community Benefits Team, presented findings from the advisory group assessment process.

The assessment included historical data review, interviews, surveys of current and former members, internal workshops, and research on comparable regional and national projects.

Key findings included:

Attendance and Retention

- Meeting attendance has declined over time across CAG and EAG, with no significant difference between appointed and at-large members
- Member drop rates increased notably in 2023, particularly for members serving on multiple advisory groups
- Recruitment and onboarding of new members did not keep pace with attrition

Strengths

- Advisory groups increased transparency and legitimacy by creating trusted, two-way communication with the Program
- Members built meaningful relationships and advocacy networks
- The time-bound and clearly scoped Community Benefits Advisory Group (CBAG) model supported stronger engagement and outcomes Safety and comfort: ensuring ease of journey

Challenges

- Limited decision-making authority and program uncertainty made it difficult for members to see the impact of their input
- Sustaining long-term engagement was challenging given technical subject matter and extended timelines

Opportunities

- Clarify advisory group roles, purpose, and scope of influence
- Strengthen feedback loops demonstrating how input is used
- Adjust meeting cadence, duration, and format to support engagement
- Increase interactive and member-driven discussion

Comparisons to national best practices highlighted the opportunity for the Program to more clearly define future advisory group roles, establish more manageable time commitments for future participants, and improve alignment between advisory input and decision-making windows.

OPEN DISCUSSION AND ADVISORY GROUP REFLECTIONS

During the open discussion, advisory group members reflected on their experiences with the Program and offered candid observations, appreciation, and recommendations as the Program approaches a critical transition point.

A Program in Transition

Several advisory group members expressed deep gratitude to outgoing Program Administrator Greg Johnson for his leadership, noting that his tenure helped move the Program further than at any previous point. Members shared appreciation for his ability to provide historical context, bring technical complexity into accessible conversations, and create opportunities such as bridge tours that helped translate abstract planning into tangible understanding. Members also welcomed Interim Program Administrator Carley Francis and expressed hope for continuity, stability, and momentum during the leadership transition.

A recurring theme was a strong desire to see the project move forward into construction. Multiple members emphasized that the region is close to the finish line and that, while compromises have been difficult, most participants would prefer delivery of a bridge rather than continued delay. Some members noted that the Program has advanced the project to this point under challenging and evolving conditions.

The Importance of Community Participation

Advisory group members reflected on the learning value of participation. Many described the process as highly educational, providing exposure to perspectives they had not previously considered, including river users, freight movement, multimodal transportation needs, and community impacts. Members highlighted the importance of understanding the bridge not only as infrastructure, but as a place with economic, cultural, and community significance, including the substantial commerce that occurs on and beneath the river.

Several participants emphasized the value of in-person engagement, particularly bridge tours and site visits, which deepened understanding and strengthened relationships among members and Program staff. Members noted that hybrid participation options, opportunities to connect informally, and varied engagement formats helped sustain involvement over time. Some reflected that early engagement tools or processes evolved as the group learned what worked best and recommended that future advisory efforts provide a wide range of participation options from the outset to accommodate different capacities and needs.

There was also reflection on advisory group structure and clarity. Some members shared that it took time to fully understand the purpose, scope, and distinctions among the different advisory groups, including the CBAG. In hindsight, members suggested that earlier clarity around roles, timelines, and influence might have strengthened engagement and alignment. Others noted that the advisory groups tackled complex and difficult issues and expressed pride in being part of a group that engaged substantively with challenging questions while maintaining respect and professionalism.

Members acknowledged that consensus is not always achievable in a project of this scale. Several noted that while opposition to certain elements remains vocal, it likely represents a minority, and that it is unrealistic to expect full agreement across all communities. Participants recognized the difficulty of leading a long-term infrastructure project through changing economic, political, and social conditions, and emphasized that evolving circumstances inevitably shape project vision and outcomes.

Areas of Continued Interest

Community benefits and workforce outcomes were repeatedly highlighted as areas of anticipation. Members expressed interest in seeing these elements move from planning into implementation, including workforce access, economic opportunity, and tangible community benefits. Advisory group members recognized the innovation involved in building these components alongside a major infrastructure project and acknowledged the risks inherent in doing so.

Several members raised forward-looking questions about the Program's next phase. These included interest in understanding how project phasing and investment prioritization decisions will be made, how community voice will inform those decisions, and how advisory expertise might continue to be leveraged as cost estimates and Coast Guard determinations are finalized. Some members expressed concern that it may be premature to fully sunset advisory engagement given the significance of upcoming decisions.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sharon Nasset, with Third Bridge Now: I am with a 501(c)3 nonprofit. It is Third Bridge Now and our website is www.thirdbridgenow.org. We are commonly known as the River Crossing 14, the alternative to replacing the bridge. We have two community awards. If you are trying to represent our community

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and you do not know about it, and have not seen the awards or other things, you really need to become informed please. My phone number is 503-283-9585. I know this is public. And my email is SharonNassett@aol.com. There is no way to contact any of you members even though you are supposed to be representing our group, and I am in the deadline again because of short windows to leave information. The main point I would like to make today is I've been involved in this over 25 years, been on several committees, [and I'm a] community advocate. Anyway, it was a replacement bridge or a supplemental bridge. A supplemental bridge or a replacement bridge if we needed it. In 2006, a full inspection was supposed to be given to the citizens. There was no oversight committees. All of them are steering committees. They have still not produced a full independent inspection of the bridge that [concludes] it needs to be replaced. In 2010, the oversight independent panel review asked them for a list of the repairs the bridge needed, what the costs were, and why they had chosen on removing the bridge instead of replacing it. Silence. No list. They had never had a formal inspection by an actual bridge company, and to date, they still have not and cannot prove why the bridge should be removed when in 2005, the Oregon Seal said it had 60 years of life left. And they have not ever done a seismic one. In 2010, they said why there was a difference between 50 million from the I-5 partnership and the amounts they're saying now. Never was it a replacement. Thank you.

CLOSING AND GRATITUDE

Program leadership thanked advisory group members, facilitators, and staff for their sustained engagement and contributions. Outgoing Administrator Greg Johnson was recognized for his leadership, and Interim Administrator Carley Francis reaffirmed the Program's commitment to delivering a multimodal bridge replacement that serves regional mobility, commerce and community needs.

ADJOURN

ACTION ITEMS

- None

ATTENDEES

Attendees	Organization/Affiliation
CAG & EAG Members	
Aidan Gronauer	IBR
Brenda Martin	Portland Bureau of Transportation
Chandra Washington	C-TRAN

Attendees	Organization/Affiliation
Dena Horton	Pacific Northwest Waterways Association
Ed Washington	CAG Co-Chair
Gerina Hatch	Community in Motion
Irina Phillips	East European Coalition
Jana Jarvis	Oregon Trucking Association
Jonathan Eder	Port of Vancouver
Julie Doumbia	Community Member
Lynn Valenter	CAG Co-Chair
Martha Wiley	Public Transit Representative, Washington
Meg Johnson	Community Member
Mikaela Williams	Community Member
Nicole Chen	City of Vancouver
Pat Daniels	Constructing Hope
Sam Kim	Community Member
Sebrina Owens-Wilson	Metro
Sokho Eath	IRCO
Zachary Lauritzen	Oregon Walks
IBR Staff	
Dr. Roberta Suzette Hunte	EAG Facilitator
Lisa Keohokalole Schauer	CAG Co-facilitator
Greg Johnson	Program Administrator
Carley Francis	Interim Program Administrator

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Attendees	Organization/Affiliation
Frank Green	Assistant Program Administrator
Paige Schlupp	Assistant Program Administrator
Ray Mabey	Assistant Program Administrator
Johnell Bell	Fair Access Officer
Fabiola Casas	Community Benefits Team
Hannah Williams	Community Engagement Team
Megan Elliot	Public Affairs Team
Brenda Torres Siragusa	Community Benefits Team
Robert Arreola	Tech Support