

MEETING SUMMARY

Subject: Equity Advisory Group (EAG) Meeting Summary

Date and Time: 2/21/2022 – 5:30 pm PST

Location: Zoom Webinar and YouTube Live

Concurrent YouTube viewers: 13

ATTENDEES

Attendees	Organization
IBR Staff	
Brent Hamlin	IBR Technical Support
Emilee Thomas Peralta	IBR Equity Team
Greg Johnson	IBR Program Administrator
Jake Warr	IBR Equity Lead
Dr. Roberta Hunte	IBR EAG Facilitator
Johnell Bell	IBR Principal Equity Officer
Salomé Chimuku	IBR Equity/Community Engagement
Vicky Smith	IBR Transit Project Engineer
John Willis	IBR Deputy Program Manager
Audri Bomar	IBR Communications Lead
Tanya Adams	WSP
Katherine Kelly	City of Vancouver
Kelly Betteridge	IBR Transit Design Team
Rob Turton	IBR Major Structures Lead

Attendees	Organization
Millicent Williams	IBR Communications Team
EAG Members	
John Gardner	TriMet
Matt Serres	Disability Rights Oregon
Megan Johnson	Community member
Monica Tellez-Fowler	C-Tran
Shona Carter	Community Foundation of SW Washington
Shane Valle	City of Portland
Albert Lee	NAACP Portland
Hai That Ho Ton	Community Member
Lily Copenhagle	NAACP Portland
Alicia Soujourner	City of Vancouver
Sebrina Owens Wilson	Metro

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome & Outcomes

Dr. Roberta Hunte, EAG Meeting Facilitator

Dr. Hunte welcomed the group, reviewed the technical instructions for the meeting, and stated the agenda.

Program Administrator Update

Greg Johnson, IBR Program Administrator

Program Update:

- We have been running equity and technical analysis on different design options. We used screening criteria created in part by Equity Advisory Group (EAG) to help screen items for equitable treatment. We are in the process the next month, to month and a half for decisions to be rolled out to the EAG. We are centering equity in the decision-making process. Equity is important to the communities, the region, and the Departments of Transportation (DOTs) sponsoring the program. We are potentially looking to have more than one EAG meeting per month moving forward to ensure folks see, react, and apply input to the program before July. We are not at the center of the Washington funding discussion, yet it is a critical for this program to be endorsed by state legislature for the local funding piece of this program.

Questions: None.

IBR Transit Investment-Summary of Draft Findings and Next Steps

Kelly Betteridge, Transit Design Team

Process Update:

- Overview of process to date
 - Development of representative transit investments
 - Developed 11 representative transit investments so the program could understand more about how possible projects might perform relative to others
 - After a preferred transit solution is selected, project components will be optimized and refined as design advances and benefits and impacts are better understood
 - Overview of representative options, used to understand how possible project investments perform relative to each other
 - Development of transit measures
 - The IBR team developed measures with project partners to better understand how the representative transit investments would perform relative to each other
 - Measures included: Multiple measures of ridership demand in 2045; access for equity priority communities; relative costs; potential impacts; and others
- What has changed for transit since 2013?
 - C-TRAN has developed and begun implementation of the Vine BRT network

- City of Vancouver has worked with C-TRAN to design robust station environments for the Vine system on Broadway and Washington in the Central Business District
- The City of Vancouver has seen substantial growth in the Waterfront district as planned for in the Waterfront Development Plan
- The population of the region is growing and diversifying. Since 2010 Clark County's population has grown by nearly 78,000, 76% of which are people of color.

Draft findings from transit measures:

- Early draft findings
 - All build options substantially improve service over the no build
 - There is a lot of demand for cross river transit service
 - Capacity, both at the transit investment level and at the system level, are important considerations for selecting a preferred alternative
 - A transit investment that serves the identified markets and attempts to serve demand will need to include a combination of Vine BRT, LRT, and express bus
- Transfers from other transit vehicles are the highest mode of access for all representative transit investments. This highlights the importance of conveniently connecting the C-TRAN and TriMet Systems
- When comparing the same representative alignment, LRT options have higher ridership than BRT options
- Park and ride demand is robust in all representative investment scenarios
- Options that include more stations serve more residents within walking distance, including BIPOC and low-income populations
- All transit investments improve access to jobs including BIPOC and low-income populations
- When comparing the same representative alignment, LRT options have a higher capital cost and lower operating cost per rider than BRT options
- GOAL: To move forward with a focused list of representative transit investments to optimize

- The representative transit investment development process has taken place over the fall and winter with the goal of better understanding what type of transit investment would best serve the project corridor and the region
- The process casts a wide net and includes many inputs
- The program is tasked with selecting a preferred transit investment that includes mode alignment this spring
- As we move closer to the goal, we need to narrow our focus to fewer representative transit investments that we believe best balance outputs
- We would like your feedback on early draft findings

Next Steps:

- Working to define the preferred transit investment for inclusion in the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and further study in the SDEIS
- Feedback on takeaways to inform winnowing
- Return to group in March

Questions:

EAG Member: What is your definition of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)? Would the BRT be focused only on the crossing itself or would it be dedicated all the way down to Portland?

Kelly Betteridge: BRT investment is a spectrum of potential investments. For this investment we assumed all BRT options were dedicated facilities that would tie into Vancouver's existing robust BRT program. We assumed that any trips south of Expo would happen via the existing yellow line.

EAG Member: Depending on the type of BRT, system, light rail does not always have higher capacity. Extending BRT to Expo, then having rider switch to LRT causes connection switch points, which cause inefficiencies. Would it make more sense to have a dedicated lane to take passengers all the way down to Portland so it's avoiding traffic and to avoid inefficiencies with transfers? There's a question about difference in operational costs, electric transit has significantly reduced costs.

Kelly Betteridge: There are all sorts of BRT investments, and in this early phase we had to make a number of assumptions to allow for analysis. Changes to this can be made during the optimization phase. You are correct that a BRT vehicle can hold a lot of riders, with up to 100, but then it becomes a question of frequency. All of these choices can be dived into in further detail as we work to optimize options once it's been narrowed.

Transit equity benefits analysis

Jake Warr, Equity Lead

- Analysis Overview: Two Components
 - Populations & demographics around stations
 - Improvements in access to jobs
- Keep in mind:
 - This is an analysis of potential walking access and mobility benefits from high-capacity transit investments
 - Geared toward BIPOC and low-income populations
 - One component of IBR equity commitment
 - This is not: a biking and park-and-ride analysis; adequate to fully understand all benefits and burdens; a review of all transit investments & equity initiatives in the region; inclusive of needed community actions
- Analysis 1: Populations near stations
 - Ten Representative Transit Investments: Compare Light Rail Transit (LRT); BRT; Hybrid (LRT+BRT)
 - Transit station “walksheds” overview
 - Chart walkthrough regarding BIPOC & Low-income residents near stations
 - Discussion of takeaways regarding populations near stations
- Questions:
 - EAG Member: Can you please explain the ten representative transit investments
 - Jake: Each column is different type of transit; colors correspond to colors on map.
 - EAG Member: Following up on Jake’s comment that where they live during the analysis may not be where they live when the project is done, I wanted to deliver a real-life example of how developments push people out. I do not see people remaining in those spaces without additional policies that will protect them against gentrification. Is the public transit part an

- add-on to a bridge project that is focused on cars and trailers, or are you changing behavior, modes, and systems people are utilizing. Are you trying to get people out of cars? If that's the case, I'm lost on the focus on Park and Rides.
- Greg Johnson: I'd like to take the question regarding the commitment to transit mode on this program. This project is a 3.2-4.8-billion-dollar project. Depending on which transit mode is selected, the transit mode will cost 1/3 of this program budget. We are serious about making this a multimodal corridor to give people choices and different ways to cross through this five-mile section of the interstate. We are focused in creating bike and walk modes to get people where they need to go. We recognize automotive mode cannot take on the burden of the future in this corridor, we know that this has to be a shared burden between all modes. Hopefully as we move forward, we will create better options. The current bridge has limited options.
 - EAG Member: Do transit station walksheds include truly walkable and accessible spaces for all mobility forms? There are no sidewalks on a lot of the streets within the shown walksheds.
 - Jake: This considers the street network. It does not consider curb ramps or other elements to make it accessible. But with station investments, access to that station will be part of the investment.
 - Greg Johnson: We will be looking at improvements outside the actual footprint of the program to make sure folks have unimpeded access. This is part of a larger regional effort to ensure all abilities can reach stations safely.
 - EAG Member: With feedback in hand from disability communities- how are we using that to help?
 - Jake: We started with Title VI focus and equity priority communities. Audri Bomar will also be presenting on community engagement processes, which is a crucial element of understanding shortcomings of this type of analysis.
- Analysis 2: Improvements in access to jobs
 - Combines projected jobs in 2045 with current demographics; baseline: projected 2045 transit network, without HCT as part of IBR ('no build'); travel time includes walking + riding transit; analyzes access to jobs for residents of the IBR program area (Washington and Oregon sides)
 - Overview of map regarding where people can reach the most jobs via transit (No Build Scenario, 2045)
 - Overview of map regarding IBR Equity Index & Existing Transit Routes

- Overview of map of Equity and Essential Places Map that overlays demographics where investments have been made, and includes the BRT Vine.
- Overview of Comparison chart with BIPOC and white populations
- Takeaways: Improvements to job access.
 - LRT investments appear to provide greater benefit than BRT. All investments would increase job access. Most investments would increase job access for the BIPOC program area residents as much or more than white residents. Investments are mixed in terms of comparison.
- Comparison chart regarding: BIPOC and white populations
- Questions
 - EAG member: the population size is not the same, so it's significantly more for BIPOC communities, right?
 - Jake: These are not people, they are number of jobs, and it's a calculation of the average person and where they live.
 - EAG member: When you say jobs, does it mean all kinds of jobs or a specific type? It seems it would be more accurate to include jobs that can be immediately filled, unlike a software engineer, to make it more comparable or practical.
 - Jake: This model uses all types of jobs. Jobs are a proxy for other types of things that people can access as well.

Community engagement overview:

Audri Bomar, Communications Lead

- Overview Community Engagement by the Numbers chart including 9600 survey responses
- Advisory Group Participation: Survey results aligned with overall feedback; 44 Community Advisory Group (CAG) and EAG members completed the survey
- Design Options Feedback – Overall Takeaway: Desire to relieve congestion and reduce greenhouse gases; Most influential travel factors include trip time, ease of trip, and toll avoidance; mixed feedback on number of lanes and environmental concerns; most values and priorities expressed for design option considerations

- Equity-Priority Engagement Feedback: Review of BIPOC, People Living with Disabilities, Youth and People Living with Lower Income, Limited English Proficiency, Immigrants, and Refugees listening sessions
- High- Capacity Transit Design Option Feedback: Survey – Travel time ranked as most important; majority would access transit by car via a park and ride location; youth placed a higher priority on cost to user when considering transit use; half of all respondents chose to skip questions related to transit; location of transit station; received 1700 open-ended survey comments
- Key Takeaways: Support for implementation of high-capacity transit system; desire for multiple transportation options; need for increased parking at park and ride facilities; desire for greater connectivity from Clark County into Portland; emphasis on the need for a convenient and user-friendly transit system; desire for increased access to downtown Vancouver and the waterfront
- Next Steps: Feedback will be considered in the decision-making process for identifying a Modified LPA; continued engagement and outreach as the program works towards consensus and into the NEPA process

Questions:

EAG Member: Will disaggregated data be available in your report?

Audri: Yes; in the appendix

EAG Member: Was there a huge difference of opinion when it came to where they reside as opposed to where they travel?

Audri: There was no starkly different feedback between OR / WA states

Public Comment:

None

Announcements:

Salome: There is an upcoming roundtable featuring people involved in the IBR program. The topic is the black community and the relationship with infrastructure. EAG staff and Community Advisory Group will be participating. The event will be streamed live.

Wrap Up:

Three Takeaways & Meeting Evaluation Poll:

Takeaways:

EAG Member: Encourage work to move beyond conversations. We need to consider how does this intersect and impact BIPOC and low-income communities, and how does it affect senior, disability, or mobility communities' constraints to navigate to stops and stations.

EAG Member: A big piece for me is whichever transit mode we choose or goes forward- they all have to work in tandem. The bridge needs to connect two spaces and they need equal access to all transit, not just cars. Connectivity is a priority.

Dr. Hunte: Thank you for your robust engagement. I appreciate your questions and seeking clarity, which generates shared understanding.

Meeting Evaluation poll shared.

March 21 is spring break. Do we need to reschedule? Should we push out one week earlier to March 14? Yes, and let Jake know if it's a barrier.

Dr. Hunte announced the next meeting on March 14, thanked the members, and closed the meeting.

Meeting Adjourn time: 7:30pm