

## EXECUTIVE STEERING GROUP (ESG)

### MEETING HIGH-LEVEL MEETING SUMMARY

Date and Time: October 21, 2024, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Location: Zoom and YouTube Livestream

**Executive Steering Group Members in Attendance:** Mayor Anne McEnery-Ogle (City of Vancouver), Julianna Marler (Port of Vancouver), Jack Burkman (Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council), Mingus Mapps (City of Portland), Roger Millar (WSDOT), General Manager Sam Desue, Jr. (TriMet), Director Kris Strickler (Oregon Department of Transportation), Executive Director Curtis Robinhold (Port of Portland), President Lynn Peterson (Oregon Metro), Chief Executive Officer Leann Caver (C-Tran), Executive Director Matt Ransom (Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council)

**IBR Program Staff in Attendance:** Greg Johnson (Program Administrator), Anita Kea'lani Yap (Facilitator), Chris Regan (Environmental Manager), Paige Schlupp (Assistant Program Administrator), Ryan LeProwse (Transportation Lead), Ray Mabey (Assistant Program Administrator), Frank Green (Assistant Program Administrator), Shannon Singleton (Community Benefits Lead), Emilee Thomas Peralta (CBAG)

### WELCOME, INTRODUCTION, PROPOSED AGENDA AND UPDATES

Facilitator Anita Kea'lani Yap opened the meeting addressing standard protocols, shared public comment instructions and acknowledged comments received and distributed prior to the meeting to ESG members, went over ground rules and reviewed the agenda.

ESG members provided relevant updates from their departments that have taken place since the last ESG meeting and shared their collective excitement for the release of the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS).

### PROGRAM UPDATES

IBR Program Administrator Greg Johnson highlighted the securing of a \$1.499 billion grant and a recent visit and bridge tour with Federal Transit Administration's Administrator Veronica Vanterpool. Johnson also shared that the IBR program recently participated in a roundtable discussion with Representative Larsen and Representative Gluesenkamp Perez and had very good conversation about the program's progress. Johnson also spoke about the many presentations, tabling opportunities and ongoing stakeholder engagement occurring during the public comment period.

Johnson provided details on the most recent Joint State Commission Meeting to discuss overall transportation issues in each state and heard feedback from the I-5 Bridge Bi-State Tolling Subcommittee's recommended toll rates and policies. The Subcommittee approved scenarios that will be studied in the Level

3 Investment Toll Traffic and Revenue Study and moved forward for analysis. Administrator Johnson shared details on the National Historic Preservation Act's required Section 106 Historic Properties public comment period, which is running separately yet parallel to the Draft SEIS public comment period.

## DRAFT SEIS & PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITIES

IBR Environmental Manager, Chris Regan, discussed the Draft SEIS, which is a supplemental environmental analysis document that builds on the I-5 Columbia River Crossing Project's (CRC) 2008 Draft EIS, 2011 Final EIS and 2011 Record of Decision. The Modified Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) similarly builds on the CRC LPA and includes modifications made to address changes in the physical environment, community priorities and regulations. The Draft SEIS evaluates the Modified LPA in comparison to a No Build Alternative and includes multiple design options being studied. The analysis for the Draft SEIS is conducted for the future, which is the year 2045 for this document. Regan also mentioned the availability of visualizations and fly-through videos on the IBR website to aid community understanding and assist them with providing effective public comment.

IBR Transportation Lead, Ryan LeProwse, shared information about the transportation findings outlined in the Draft SEIS document. These findings indicate that – when compared to the No Build Alternative – the Modified LPA is expected to reduce crashes; better accommodate the expected increase in people moving through the corridor while reducing the number of vehicles on the road; improve access to public transit; provide safer and more accessible crossings for people who walk, bike and roll and decrease travel times and reduce the number of hours of congestion on the bridge. LeProwse provided detailed information on these forecasted transportation findings. IBR Assistant Program Administrator Paige Schlupp provided additional details on the transit findings.

IBR Assistant Program Administrator, Ray Mabey, shared the benefits, impacts and neutral changes to marine navigation on the Columbia River when compared to the No Build Alternative, as well as the different bridge configuration options' clearances and gradients. Mabey also explained the proposed acquisitions and displacements associated with the Draft SEIS options being studied, which would include up to 47 acres of acquisition and displacements of 43 residential units, 36 businesses and 1 public use sites. Assistant Administrator Mabey shared details on the Right of Way Process, noting that the IBR program will do everything feasible to avoid and minimize potential impacts to property through final design and construction. If it is determined that all or a portion of a property is necessary for the program investments, property appraisals backed by independent analyses will serve as the basis for all negotiations of property acquisitions. IBR Assistant Program Administrator, Frank Green, shared the benefits and impacts to economic activity, as well as the benefits of construction on economic activity according to the Draft SEIS document. Benefits include improved freight mobility, improved access to economic opportunities for all demographics due to faster travel times, increased employment and increased spending during construction. Impacts include reduced property tax revenue compared to the No Build Alternative due to displacement of residential units and businesses and up to 616 impacted jobs due to 36 displaced businesses, as well as a potential impact to local businesses near Mill Plain Boulevard and downtown Vancouver due to traffic delay and increased travel time with one option to remove C Street Ramps. Green also shared the Environmental Justice (EJ) impacts and benefits, including disproportionately high and adverse impacts associated with

tolling costs, residential and business displacements in EJ areas and potential impacts to cultural resources. Finally, Green spoke on how the IBR program is centering equity in this work and how equity benefits and impacts are reflected in the Draft SEIS document.

Chris Regan continued the presentation by explaining more about the Section 106 Cultural Resources Summary of Potential Effects to Archaeological Sites and Summary of Identified Adverse Effects to Historic Built Environment Resources, as well as the climate change benefits and impacts with the Modified LPA in comparison to the No Build Alternative. Regan pointed out that the Modified LPA would have a substantial beneficial effect on water quality by including stormwater treatment facilities and treating 190 acres of stormwater that is currently untreated. Regan concluded with information on the various methods available to access the Draft SEIS document and how to provide a formal public comment.

Mark Ransom (RTC) asked Chris Regan how much room there will be for people to bring forward questions that haven't been already assessed in the Draft SEIS document. Regan responded that the goal of the public comment period is for the program to be able to address the needs of the community, so if there are questions or comments on any of the topics within the document (or what is missing), we want to hear those comments. The NEPA process requires us to respond to all comments received during the public comment period, so those comments and our responses will be included in the Final SEIS.

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS ADVISORY GROUP (CBAG) UPDATES

IBR CBAG Lead, Shannon Singleton, shared the Community Benefits Advisory Group (CBAG) process and community benefits categories, which are based on the IBR program equity objectives. These categories include plans and mitigations already included in the program, program partner conditions, partner agency contributions and additional benefits identified by CBAG and the community. Singleton explained the CBAG process overview and shared that they are currently in the review/refine stage (tentatively 9/2024-4/2025), following their brainstorm stage (3/2024-8/2024), and the final stage will be sharing their recommendations (tentatively 2/2025-5/2025).

Emilee Thomas Peralta reviewed the first tranche of community benefits recommendations voted on by the CBAG, related to mobility and accessibility, physical design, community benefits and avoiding further harm. Thomas Peralta shared a few questions with ESG members to open discussion.

President Lynn Peterson (Oregon Metro) shared her gratitude with CBAG for their recognition of the Expo site and the impact it's had throughout its history and asked for specifics on what that recognition could look like. Singleton shared that the committee acknowledged that there is work that needs to be done and the desire is for Oregon Metro to lead that effort in redevelopment and honoring its history of Japanese internment. Peterson clarified that Oregon Metro would like to know more about the potential for IBR park & ride development and how that might impact the actualization of the Expo site and possible visitor center.

Executive Director Curtis Robinhold (Port of Portland) shared a recent experience of the high costs of trying to save as much of an existing structure as possible and recommended that while the conceptual idea of

conservation and recycling remain for CBAG, he urged the team not to lose focus on the financial practicalities to ensure the program is a success. Singleton thanked the ESG members and requested that any additional thoughts or questions be shared with her and Thomas Peralta after the meeting.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

## NEXT STEPS

Administrator Johnson shared the next steps for the Draft SEIS public comment period which closes on November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024. After the period closes, the IBR program will coordinate with the federal lead agencies, program partners and program steering and advisory groups to refine the preferred alternative. Responses to public comments and refinements to the design and technical analysis will be published in the Final SEIS in mid to late 2025, and the amended Record of Decision to follow will serve as federal approval to begin construction.

## CLOSING

Anita Kea'lani Yap closed the meeting, expressing gratitude to the group for the partnership and work that is being done.

The meeting adjourned at 10:57a.m. and has 141 public views.

A record of the meeting is available here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LcQ\\_XU-ajQI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LcQ_XU-ajQI)

The meeting materials are available here: <https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/esg-october-21-2024-meeting/>