

## COMMUNITY BENEFITS ADVISORY GROUP (CBAG)

### MEETING SUMMARY #17

Date and Time: Thursday, Jan. 23, 2025 / 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Location: Hybrid (In-person and Zoom meeting) and [YouTube livestream](#)

Number of concurrent YouTube viewers: 15

### OUTCOMES

- CBAG members reviewed and refined potential community benefit recommendations in the first part of Tranche 4.

### WELCOME

Johnell Bell, IBR Principal Equity Officer and co-facilitator, opened the January 2025 CBAG meeting. He then reviewed instructions to access closed captioning, meeting participation tips, sign language interpretation reminders, public input instructions and group agreements.

Greg Johnson, IBR Program Administrator, welcomed attendees and thanked them for their participation.

Bell and Emilee Thomas-Peralta, IBR Community Benefits Lead and co-facilitator, led a round of introductions by asking members to share their names, organizational affiliation or at-large status and pronouns if they wished. Members also answered a check-in question, "What's something that suddenly reminds you of your hometown?" as part of their introductions.

Bell then provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Bell shared information on the process for submitting CBAG public comments during and after the meeting. No written comments were submitted prior to the meeting and no members of the public provided comments during the meeting.

### PROGRAM UPDATES

Johnson shared that the program signed final agreements for \$2.1 billion in federal grants, paving the way for the procurement and construction phases. He also highlighted the IBR team's role in supporting the City of

Vancouver’s successful grant application for the Community Connector project, which reconnects downtown Vancouver with Fort Vancouver.

Johnson noted recent coverage of the strong federal support for the Program, and addressed questions related to recent federal actions and their impact to the Program.

Johnson then shared the following update on program presentations:

- The program has continued to engage interested parties through presentations, including the Design Build Forum in Bremerton, the TriMet Committee on Accessible Transportation (CAT), the Professional Land Surveyors of Oregon’s 2025 Conference, and the Clark County Regional Emergency Services Agency.

## REVIEW/REFINE COMMUNITY BENEFITS IN TRANCHE 4

Thomas-Peralta opened the discussion by expressing gratitude to the group for their dedication and hard work, particularly in navigating complex decisions in previous tranches. She acknowledged the team’s significant contributions, including asking challenging questions and collaborating effectively, which have been instrumental in advancing the project.

Thomas-Peralta noted that the CBAG will be discussing Tranche 4 for the next few months and opened up discussion with the group on the first portion of Tranche 4.

### Mobility and Accessibility (MA):

**MA – 15: Involve experts with lived experience and the broader community in transportation planning to ensure that designs effectively address the mobility and accessibility needs of various groups, especially individuals with disabilities.**

CBAG members emphasized the importance of going beyond Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance to address nuanced mobility and accessibility needs. The language was flagged as ambiguous, with suggestions to explicitly differentiate “experts with lived experience” from “broader community representatives,” and to include underserved communities, such as low-income and communities of color. Concerns about legal risks of exceeding ADA standards were noted, with a call for careful framing to avoid establishing unintended precedent.

Suggestions for language refinement and edits include:

- Clarify the distinction between experts and community representatives.
- Add “beyond minimum ADA standards” to reflect broader intent.
- Expand focus to include low-income and marginalized communities.

**MA – 18: Implement periodic reviews and revisions to the infrastructure plans post-implementation to ensure they continuously meet community needs and adapt based on practical use and feedback.**

Discussions included the importance of establishing a mechanism for maintaining oversight post-construction and ensuring that community voices, particularly those of disabled and underserved populations, are included in evaluations. Johnson clarified that the IBR program would remain involved through the delivery phase and that the Program’s current advisory groups could potentially evolve into one oversight entity to uphold commitments throughout the lifespan of the Program.

Suggestions for language refinement and edits include:

- Replace “post-implementation” with “post-construction” or “post-occupancy” for clarity.
- Consider specifying a timeframe for reviews, such as three or five years after construction.
- Emphasize re-engaging communities, including disabled and underserved groups, for evaluations.

**MA – 25: Incorporate safety metrics such as parent comfort level for bike paths and level of traffic stress in urban design to ensure user-friendliness and safety.**

CBAG members were asked to clarify the type of metrics or signage they were referring to in this recommendation. A member proposed incorporating a specific metric "level of traffic stress" (LTS) that is often used in urban design. The group noted that some elements of this recommendation may already exist within design standards but emphasized the need to explore best practices and enhancements. A specific focus was placed on designing infrastructure that accommodates all ages and abilities.

Suggestions for language refinement and edits include:

- Include the metric "level of traffic stress (LTS)" to reflect the established metric used in transportation planning.
- Emphasize designing for “all ages and abilities”
- Consider combining this recommendation with others on multimodal paths and wayfinding, ensuring clarity and alignment.

**Physical Design (PD) category:**

**PD – 14: Ensure early integration of aesthetics into the bridge design by securing buy-in from elected officials and allocating budget early.**

Members debated the necessity of specifying "elected officials" in the recommendation, expressing concern about elevating decision-making to a political level, which caused delays in past projects. Instead, there was broad support for shifting the focus toward community-driven processes.

The discussion highlighted the importance of maintaining community input throughout the project and ensuring aesthetic priorities are protected from being deprioritized during budget adjustments. Johnson

clarified that aesthetic considerations, including columns and bridge type, are already included in the budget. He also noted that a reconstituted community advisory group could continue to play a key role in ensuring community preferences are upheld throughout the design and construction processes.

Suggestions for language refinement and edits include:

- Replace "elected officials" with broader terms such as "community stakeholders" or "local oversight groups" to avoid political delays and ensure inclusive engagement.
- Consider combining this recommendation with PD – 11, which focuses on incorporating art, culture, and design accountability, to avoid redundancy and strengthen alignment.

**PD – 16: Incorporate educational information near the waterfront about local vegetation and add identifying markers for native plants.**

CBAG members discussed integrating educational materials near the waterfront, focusing on ecosystem health, cultural heritage and public education. Members emphasized that signage should highlight the Program's contributions to the environment and include cultural and historical context. Suggestions included adding plant identification markers, incorporating cultural landmarks and ensuring accessibility for all community members.

Johnson noted that while there is a possibility that a Department of Transportation (DOT) could install these features, long-term maintenance would likely require partnerships with local communities. This collaborative approach would ensure consistent upkeep and alignment with community expectations.

Suggestions for language refinement and edits include:

- Emphasize the integration of ecosystem health, cultural heritage and educational opportunities rather than solely focusing on plant identification.
- Include design considerations that make educational materials, such as plant markers and signage, accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- Add references to local landmarks and culturally significant elements to strengthen ties between the natural and cultural heritage of the area.
- Acknowledge the need for maintenance agreements with local partners to sustain these features beyond installation.

**PD – 19: Consider ecological impacts when developing lighting designs.**

The group's discussion highlighted considerations for wildlife as well as using wavelengths that are less disruptive to nearby ecosystems. Discussions also noted that "dark sky" standards and animal impact mitigation are typically part of the design considerations.

Suggestions for language refinement and edits include:

- Emphasize the inclusion of "dark sky" principles and wavelength considerations in the lighting design.
- Highlight the need to mitigate disruptions to migratory birds and other wildlife.

- Explore the integration of nesting structures for species like ospreys while addressing concerns about invasive species, such as pigeons.

**PD – 20: Install well-designed, concealable garbage cans to maintain the bridge’s cleanliness and aesthetic appeal.**

*\* Note: This recommendation will be discussed further during the February CBAG meeting.*

**Community Benefits (CB) category:**

**CB – 6: Provide online access to 3D models of the program to aid in visual understanding of the design.**

*\* Note: This recommendation will be discussed further during the February CBAG meeting.*

**CLOSING REMARKS**

Bell transitioned to the next agenda item, informing members about upcoming CBAG and program meetings. Johnson commended members for their hard work and dedication to community benefits.

**ATTENDEES**

Attendees	Organization
<b>CBAG Members</b>	
Greg Johnson	IBR Program Administrator
Rian Windsheimer	Oregon Department of Transportation
Anne McEnery-Ogle	City of Vancouver
Corky Collier	Columbia Corridor Association
Steve Barnett	Representative for the Cowlitz Indian Tribe
Scott McCallum	Washington State School for the Blind
Peter Fels	Alliance for Community Engagement
Jayne Haygood	Vancouver Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
Walter Valenta	At-large Community Member
Farleigh Winters	LSW Architects
Holly Williams	At-large Community Member
Michael Strahs	Kimco Realty
Marcus Mundy	Coalition for Communities of Color
Vicki Nakashima	Equity Advisory Group (EAG) Representative
Tom Hickey	Community Advisory Group (CAG) Representative
Siobhana R. McEwen	Southwest Washington Equity Coalition (SWEC)

Attendees	Role
<b>IBR Staff</b>	
Frank Green	Assistant Program Administrator
Ray Mabey	Assistant Program Administrator
Aidan Gronauer	Assistant Director of Civil Rights & Equity
Johnell Bell	Principal Equity Officer
Josh Todd	Equity Team
Emilee Thomas-Peralta	Community Benefits Lead
Eric Trinh	Equity Team
Fabian Hidalgo Guerrero	Community Engagement Team
Caryn Urata	Transit Team
Brenda Siragusa	Equity Team
Amanda Hart	Technical Support

Other Attendees	Organization/Agency
Serena Stoudamire Wesley	Oregon Department of Transportation
Brenda Martin	City of Portland
Shawnea Posey	City of Portland
Lori Severino	City of Vancouver
Katherine Kelly	City of Vancouver

### Additional Participants

Online viewing is open to the public, partner agency staff and IBR team members. Fifteen participants viewed the meeting via YouTube livestream during the meeting.

## MEETING RECORDING AND MATERIALS

### Meeting Recording

[Community Benefits Advisory Group \(CBAG\) Jan. 23, 2025, 9:30AM PST \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

January 23, 2025

---



## Meeting Materials

The meeting materials are available here: [CBAG Meeting Jan. 23, 2025 | Interstate Bridge Replacement Program](#)