

COMMUNITY BENEFITS ADVISORY GROUP (CBAG)

MEETING SUMMARY #9

Date and Time: Thursday, May 23, 2024 / 9:30 – 11:30 am

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

Number of concurrent YouTube viewers: 2

OUTCOMES

- CBAG members brainstormed and discussed potential community benefits recommendations related to the Community Benefits category (find opportunities for and implement local community improvements in addition to required mitigations).

WELCOME

Emilee Thomas-Peralta, IBR Equity Team and co-facilitator, opened the May 2024 CBAG meeting. She reviewed instructions to access closed captioning, meeting participation tips, ASL interpretation reminders, public input instructions and CBAG group agreements.

Ray Mabey, Assistant Program Administrator, greeted and thanked everyone for their participation.

Eric Holmes, City of Vancouver City Manager, extended a warm welcome to attendees.

Thomas-Peralta provided an overview of the meeting's agenda. She then asked CBAG members to share their names, organizational affiliation or at-large status, and pronouns if they wished. She added a check-in question by asking each participant to share a favorite family tradition.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Thomas-Peralta shared how to provide public comments. There was no written public comment received before the meeting.

One member of the public joined virtually to provide a public comment during the meeting: Bob Ortblad commented on his preference for the program revisiting a tunnel.

Thomas-Peralta then explained the options for submitting comments post-meeting.

PROGRAM UPDATES

[USDOT Bridge Tour and Coordination \(April 30\)](#)

Mabey provided updates on recent activities, including a bridge tour for Acting Undersecretary of Transportation for Policy Christopher Coes. Coes highlighted the program's emphasis on equity, multimodal

May 23, 2024

transportation, and community engagement. Mabey expressed that this visit, along with the previous visit from the U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary, demonstrates federal commitment to the program.

Industry Event (May 6)

The IBR industry event on May 6 at the Portland Expo Center saw nearly 300 attendees, including nearly 100 Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs). The event aimed to share the proposed construction packaging and delivery plan for the IBR program, gather contractor feedback, and facilitate networking opportunities. Program staff received positive feedback about the event, and continue to follow up with attendees, including using office hours to receive additional feedback. Event materials can be found on [the IBR website](#).

Community Engagement

The IBR program spoke to several Neighborhood Associations, including Bridgeton (April 25), Vancouver Heights (April 25), and Arbor Lodge (May 16), and presented at Vancouver I-Tech Preparatory (May 3). The team also hosted an Equity Roundtable (May 21) titled “Pathways to Active Transportation - Strategies and Solutions” as part of a series created to discuss how the bi-state infrastructure program can benefit all members of the diverse community.

Other updates

- The program maintains strong connections with DBEs, attending events such as the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs (OAME) tradeshow (May 2).
- State transportation commissions remain engaged, with the program providing updates to the Washington State Transportation Commission last week (May 15).
- The bi-state toll subcommittee continues to meet regularly to discuss toll rates and policies, with decisions about rates expected six to eight months before tolling begins in 2026.

Comments and questions from CBAG members:

CBAG member: I wanted to share that some of the Joint Policy Advisory Committee members from Oregon, along with Program Administrator Greg Johnson, were in Washington, DC last week to discuss the program, funding matches, and grants with members of Congress. City of Vancouver's Mayor Anne McEnery-Ogle advocated for the program from the Washington side. This joint effort received positive feedback from both the administration and the Congressional delegation.

CBAG member: I thought the IBR industry event was great. Afterward, about 10 contractors called me regarding workforce agreements and union vs. non-union issues. I suggest having separate meetings with trade associations and prime contractors to discuss these details. More intimate sessions could encourage open discussion about challenges, helping us better establish community benefits. I'd like to discuss this further with the team.

Mabey: Thanks for sharing your thoughts. We anticipated that a large group might not allow for crucial points and conversations to surface. That's why we're keen to provide opportunities like you

mentioned, to catch up and meet in the office. I'm open to that, and I'm sure Administrator Johnson is too. We'll reach out to set up some time and figure out who to meet with on an ongoing basis.

CBAG member: I wanted to offer support for this suggestion.

PRESENTATION ON POTENTIAL COMMUNITY BENEFITS IN COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Thomas-Peralta presented examples of potential community benefits within the Community Benefits category, which is aligned with the IBR equity framework's objective to implement local improvements beyond required mitigations. This category captures benefits that don't fit well into other categories (such as mobility and accessibility or physical design) and goes beyond identified mitigations to avoid further harm.

Examples of proposed benefits include:

- Providing online access to 3D models for visual understanding of the design.
- Developing affordable housing near transit areas.
- Dispersing housing across both sides of the river to avoid concentration in a single facility.
- Exploring opportunities for community centers.
- Developing housing affordability clauses to address gentrification and displacement.
- Repurposing existing retail areas for community development.
- Creating strategies and funding options to address relocation and housing needs for people living unsheltered in the program area.

Thomas-Peralta explained that the CBAG is currently in the brainstorming phase. In the next phase, the group will review and refine these ideas, digging into details with assessments from the IBR program technical teams to identify any extra questions or analyses needed. For now, the focus is on visioning and brainstorming open ideas around potential community benefits in this category.

Thomas-Peralta then broke the meeting into small groups to further brainstorm and discuss the Community Benefits category

LARGE GROUP REPORT

Thomas-Peralta welcomed members back to the large group setting and asked each group to report the key takeaways and findings from their small group discussions.

The key takeaways included:

- Emphasis on strategic property acquisitions, consideration for alternative approaches for stormwater treatment, and concerns about air quality near the bridge as it relates to housing.
- The need for a range of housing options with clear definitions of housing types and income levels.
- Partnerships for community centers.

May 23, 2024

- The importance of bridge aesthetics and making the bridge experience enjoyable with shared spaces.
- Preservation and addition of green spaces, improvement of existing parks, and adequate signage for historic and recreational properties.
- Exploration of community ownership models, monitoring of potential home ownership strategies, and addressing immediate needs during construction.
- Regular updates on activities such as asset mapping with other program partners.
- Importance of staff diversity in property negotiation roles.
- The need for daycare facilities in large projects.
- Training programs for youth and adults to prepare them for job opportunities related to the program.
- Support for individuals with criminal histories in finding jobs.

Notes from small group discussions:

- Explore land and zoning swap strategies for freeway-adjacent land, in collaboration with housing authorities, to develop affordable housing located further from freeways.
- Explore opportunities to develop community spaces, such as an inclusive civic center with shared parking for the public market and transit station.
- Ensure the preservation of green space by identifying and maintaining green areas within the project alignment or compensating for lost green space by creating or enhancing green spaces in underserved areas.
- Eliminate N Union Ct in Portland to increase green space affected by the proposed off-ramp.
- Clean up the East Delta Dog Park between MLK and N Union Ct to ensure it can be used year-round.
- Develop comprehensive strategies and funding options with the program and other partners that can be implemented to address the relocation and housing needs of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness impacted by the program.
 - Explore partnerships with agencies providing culturally specific services focused on equity priority communities and those who conduct street outreach and engagement for housing placement.
- Support organizations in self-ownership of mobile homes by assisting with funding, leveraging loans, and land trusts.
- Explore opportunities to build a grocery store and a childcare facility during the planning stages of Jantzen Beach.
- Extend the IBR internship program to include high school students when projects start.
- Develop engagement opportunities with education systems on both sides of the river to introduce elementary and middle school students to the project's components and processes.

May 23, 2024

- Engage with partners to explore career opportunities in construction for incarcerated youth housed in their facilities around the state.
- Encourage affordable housing developers to prioritize creating more equitable housing solutions.
- Integrate community centers with affordable housing developments and healthcare services.
- Integrate river access with public spaces and stormwater facilities.
- Consider a broader range of affordable housing options at various income levels.

Consider using land next to the highway for industrial purposes instead of housing to support the need for middle-wage jobs and promote equity.

CLOSING REMARKS

Thomas-Peralta transitioned to the next segment, informing members about upcoming CBAG and program meetings.

Assistant Program Administrator Mabey commended the members for their hard work and dedication to community benefits.

ATTENDEES

Attendees	Organization
CBAG Members	
Eric Holmes	City of Vancouver City Manager
Scott McCallum	WA School for the Blind
Peter Fels	Alliance for Community Engagement
Vicki Nakashima	Equity Advisory Group Representative
Michael Strahs	Kimco Realty
Corky Collier	Columbia Corridor Association
Farleigh Winters	LSW Architects
Carley Francis	Washington State Department of Transportation
Rian Windsheimer	Oregon Department of Transportation
Tom Hickey	Community Advisory Group Representative
Walter Valenta	Community at large
Scott Sharba	Vancouver Housing Authority
Jayne Haygood	Vancouver’s Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission
Darcy Hoffman	Workforce Southwest Washington
Jasmine Tolbert	YWCA Clark County
Nate McCoy	National Association of Minority Contractors (NAMC)

Attendees	Organization
IBR Staff	
Ray Mabey	Assistant Program Administrator
Aidan Gronauer	Assistant Director of Civil Rights & Equity
Shannon Singleton	Community Benefits Lead
Erika McCalpine	Equity Team
Emilee Thomas-Peralta	Equity Team
Bree Nicoletto	Equity Team
Eric Trinh	Equity Team
Jeannet Santiago	Equity Team
Salome Chimuku	Community Engagement Lead
Fabiola Casas	Equity Team
Fabián Hidalgo Guerrero	Community Engagement Team
Paris Moore	Community Engagement Team
Monika Johnson	Equity Team
Shanrika McClain	Equity Team
Robert Arreola	Technical Support

Additional Participants

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

MEETING RECORDING AND MATERIALS

Meeting Recording

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CUrX83oP9sw>

Meeting Materials

The meeting materials are available here: <https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/cbag-meeting-may-23-2024/>