



MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 20, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Mayor Anne McEnerny-Ogle

RE: **Interstate Bridge Replacement Program (IBRP) – Executive Steering Group Meeting**

The Executive Steering Group (ESG) for the Interstate Bridge Replacement Program (IBRP) convened on Wednesday, September 15th. Mayor McEnerny-Ogle and City Manager Eric Holmes represented the City of Vancouver at the meeting, supported by staff members Katherine Kelly, Rebecca Kennedy, and Aaron Lande.

ESG members first discussed re-confirming that a bridge replacement is the best solution for this Program. Other solutions proposed through public comment have included a third bridge, high speed rail, a “common sense” alternative to upgrades the existing bridge, and an immersed tube tunnel. Program staff provided context for why solutions other than a bridge replacement do not meet the Program’s Purpose and Need. There was agreement from ESG members that solutions other than a replacement bridge would not be given consideration through the IBRP.

Next, IBR staff shared an update on technical work toward an IBR solution. The following were outlined as a proposed process to get to a solution by March, 2022:

- June – October, 2021: Identify partner agency desired outcomes and define screening criteria. Also develop design options to be screened for consideration.
- November – December, 2021: Screen design options and develop a technical recommendation.
- January – March, 2022: Develop an IBR solution.
- April – May, 2022 : Refine the IBR solution for NEPA analysis.

ESG members expressed concern about the fast timeline to achieve proposed milestones by Spring, 2022 but reiterated support for achieving a solution. They added that there needs to be adequate time built into the Program to allow for notification, discussion with, and guidance from, respective councils/boards/commissions, and community members. In addition, they stressed that they need to know what ESG will be asked and when they’ll be asked to provide recommendations on key issues.

The IBR team reiterated that the following are the key decisions that will need to be made to reach an IBR solution:

1. Transit options: mode, alignment, station locations, and associated park and ride locations
2. Interchange improvements and roadway sections: roadway and auxiliary lane configurations, interchange, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements.

3. River crossing and alignment: configuration of a replacement bridge including through lanes and auxiliary lanes
4. Replacement of North Portland Harbor Bridge: considerations of replacing this bridge

In addition to these questions, ESG members stated the importance of including discussion on tolling, and that that will be a key decision to be addressed prior to an IBR solution being accepted.

Details and meeting materials can be found [here](https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/esg-september-15-2021-meeting/) (https://www.interstatebridge.org/get-involved-folder/calendar/esg-september-15-2021-meeting/).

The next ESG meeting is scheduled for October 21, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. and the proposed topics are an overview of community engagement activities, updates on design options being developed, and review of draft screening criteria.