Metro Council's Values, Outcomes, and Actions for the I-5 Bridge Replacement Program

Metro Council's support for the I-5 Bridge Replacement (IBR) program is contingent on a clear commitment to the outcomes listed below from the Bi-state Legislative Committee, the Executive Steering Group, Community Advisory Group, Equity Workgroup, and technical committees. This document will guide all Metro decisions and review of future funding requests for the project.

The success of the I-5 Bridge will depend on Metro's coordination, cooperation and partnership with organizations on both sides of the Columbia River, including but not limited to: City of Vancouver, Port of Vancouver, SW Washington Regional Transportation Council, Washington Department of Transportation, City of Portland, Port of Portland, and the Oregon Department of Transportation. Metro embraces ongoing engagement and input from the public on the project, and especially from Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities who may benefit or be impacted by this project. Metro also recognizes indigenous communities and tribal governments as an important partner in this process.

Metro as an organization is grounded in our values which inform the outcomes that we strive for in policies, projects and programs. When it comes to transportation, Metro Council adopted the 2018 Regional Transportation Plan with four primary priorities: Equity, Safety, Climate and Congestion Relief. In addition, our Council strives for policies that promote climate resiliency, sustainability, economic prosperity, community engagement, and creating or preserving livable spaces. Many of these values, but not all, are reflected below as outcomes that Metro Council and Metro staff are striving for on the IBR project.

Value: Advancing racial equity

OUTCOMES

- Institutional leadership demonstrates and implements an explicit commitment to improve lives of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC).
- Equity starts with co-creation with community, continues with project implementation and includes equitable outcomes for communities that are impacted
- Recognize and account for the history of construction impacts on communities surrounding the I-5 bridge area, support community cohesion, and avoid neighborhood disruption.
- Connectivity to jobs and key community places (such as medical, grocery, social and community services) is improved within the study area especially for marginalized communities.
- Best practices for anti-displacement are integrated into the project design and implementation.
- Quality job opportunities for Oregonians and SW Washingtonians, especially for people of color and other underrepresented workers and local businesses while creating reliable career pathways, and investing in workforce development.
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) opportunities are maximized at every phase of the construction project through programs that provide technical assistance.

ACTIONS REQUESTED

- *Set design and contracting practices for local minority-owned contractors and small businesses that incorporates prime-contractor development programs, workforce development opportunities and anti-displacement community building investment.*
- *Give the IBRP Equity Advisory Group purview over the implementation of the DBE contracting process and/or establish a committee to oversee implementation of the DBE contracting process.*
- *Conduct in-depth analysis of the benefits and impacts to BIPOC, low income, and other transportation disadvantaged groups for design options and develop performance measures and screening criteria to reveal the anticipated benefits and impacts to these groups.*
- *Clearly demonstrate how any changes to the project alternative better addresses equity than the original Locally Preferred Alternative.*
- *Share the project equity framework with key equity groups in the region, such as the Committee on Racial Equity (CORE).*

Value: Affordability and economic prosperity

- Right-sizing the project to improve cost-effectiveness while minimizing environmental and land use impacts.
- Economic growth is enhanced by capitalizing on opportunities for supporting goods movement reliability within the bi-state and regional network.
- Hayden Island access and safety is improved and redesigned with better transit, bike, and pedestrian connections on and off the island.
- Improved mobility for goods and people is essential to enhancing regional economic growth and recovery.

ACTIONS REQUESTED:

- *Reduce and redefine the project area as described in the original Environmental Impact Statement.*
- *Develop a financial plan that includes congestion pricing and innovative financing to leverage federal and state funds.*
- *Explore opportunities to create and improve local connectivity to Hayden Island.*
- *Implement affordable and reliable high capacity transit connections to jobs and key destinations.*

Value: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality

OUTCOMES

- Congestion pricing is implemented as part of the project to both manage transportation demand and generate revenue while maximizing limited transportation funding resources.
- High capacity transit (HCT) – light rail or bus rapid transit in its own guideway- provides frequent, reliable, and high-quality connections between the two largest regional centers in the Portland region: downtown Portland and downtown Vancouver.
- HCT provides infrastructure to enable compact urban development and efficient use of infrastructure in support of the Climate Smart Strategy.

- A more efficient transportation system is achieved that improves traffic flow of the highway and improves and increases multi-modal mobility in the project area.
- Bicycle and pedestrian access and safety are improved making these modes real options for traveling and to improve access to transit.
- Air quality is improved and impacts to human health are minimized in the project area, particularly for communities of color disproportionally impacted by air toxins.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through operations and construction of the bridge, using low-carbon equipment, construction materials and other innovative construction methods

ACTIONS REQUESTED

- *Conduct analysis quickly to demonstrate if there is a viable alternative to the preferred HCT included in the Locally-Preferred Alternative- light rail transit, to better addresses the project values and purpose and need.*
- *Synchronize the project timeline with the I-5 tolling program, so that any analysis of traffic and greenhouse gas emission benefits of the project also incorporates pricing strategies for managing traffic.*
- *Link the project with larger I-5 corridor planning efforts by taking into account the transportation needs of the entire corridor, as well as the potential impacts to people living along the entire I-5 corridor.*
- *Implement congestion pricing as soon as possible and prior to completing the project.*
- *Implement high capacity transit improvements as soon as possible to improve mobility and reduce emissions.*
- *Implement a plan to reduce GHG during the construction of the bridge.*

Value: Engaging stakeholders through a transparent and inclusionary decision-making process

OUTCOMES

- Include IBR partners in developing screening criteria to evaluate project design and any considerations around changes or reaffirmation of the Locally Preferred Alternative.
- Elevate equity considerations as an integral part of project decision-making and evaluation.
- People with diverse backgrounds and expertise are engaged early enough for meaningful input. This includes engagement prior to decision-making; a more robust effort than a typical NEPA analysis.
- Communication and collaboration with interagency partners is clear, consistent, and predictable, and there is demonstrated alignment regarding accountability for project outcomes.

ACTIONS REQUESTED

- *Develop a robust public engagement process for public input to inform the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS).*
- *Authentically engage the Community Advisory Committee (CAG), Equity Advisory Group (EAG) and Executive Steering Group (ESG), and demonstrate how committee feedback is incorporated into project efforts, timelines, and milestones.*
- *Clearly define how feedback mechanisms will function between the CAG, EAG, ESG, participating agencies, ODOT staff, and the Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC).*