

CITY OF PORTLAND DESIGN COMMISSION BRIEFING COVER LETTER

Project: Interstate Bridge Replacement Program

Date: June 2nd 2022

To: The City of Portland Design Commission

From: Shilpa Mallem, IBR Deputy Design Manager

The Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) program would replace the aging Interstate 5 (I-5) bridge across the Columbia River with a modern, seismically resilient, multimodal structure. Current planning work has defined the physical and contextual changes that have occurred in the program area since 2013 and builds upon previous planning efforts accomplished as part of the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project. To address these changes, the IBR program, in coordination with program partners and the community, developed design options, desired outcomes, and transit investments, in order to identify a Modified Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) to be further studied through a Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Supplemental Final Environmental Impact Statement is estimated to be published by late 2023.

The IBR program recommendation for the Modified LPA includes key components representing foundational transportation improvements: transit investments, interchange configuration for Hayden Island/Marine Drive, and the number of auxiliary lanes across the bridge. The modified LPA recommends extending light rail transit from the Portland Expo Center across the bridge, through Hayden Island and Vancouver, to a terminus near Evergreen Station in downtown Vancouver. On Hayden Island, the program recommends a partial interchange and a full interchange at Marine Drive. The modified LPA recommends one auxiliary lane between Marine Drive and Mill Plain Boulevard, meaning there will be four lanes in each direction on the bridge.

The modified LPA recommendation in the Oregon region reflects adjustments made to the CRC LPA to address the following changes in the project area since 2013:

- **North Portland Harbor Bridge** – Over the past decade, the need to replace this seismically deficient structure has increased. The IBR program will replace the North Portland Harbor Bridge to improve seismic resiliency in the corridor.
- **Levee** – USACE, in partnership with the Multnomah County Drainage District, is planning improvements to the existing levee along the south side of the harbor. It is anticipated that the new levee design will require any improvements associated with the IBR program to stay above a 40-foot elevation (North American Vertical Datum of 1988).
- **Land use** – Changes in planned land use at the west end of Hayden Island (a marine terminal is no longer planned for Hayden Island).
- **Traffic** – Increased auto and freight volumes in the project area and updated the design year for the program from 2030 to 2045.

June 2, 2022

As part of the SDEIS, the program is re-initiating work for Section 106. In addition to the coordination with the Section 106 Consulting Parties, the IBR program will continue to conduct extensive government-to-government consultation with the program's ten federally recognized consulting tribes and one non-federally recognized tribe. Building upon the Section 106 evaluations and analyses completed during the CRC project, the IBR cultural resources team has been identifying information and resources that need to be studied further as part of the IBR SDEIS process. Currently the team is focusing on outreach to the consulting parties with the goal of deepening the understanding of cultural history in the program area.

The IBR team looks forward to the continued collaboration with the City of Portland Design Commission and its participation in the project process.