
MEMORANDUM

Date: March 27, 2024
To: Portland Historic Landmarks Commission
From: Hayli Reff, Interstate Bridge Replacement Program Cultural Resources Program Manager
Subject: Interstate Bridge Replacement Program Quarterly Informational Briefing

Overview and Project Description

This memo is regarding the upcoming informational briefing from the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program's Cultural Resources Team. The briefing, which is scheduled for April 8, 2024, is the second in a series of regular updates from the Cultural Resources Team to the Portland Historic Landmarks Commission in their capacity as a Section 106 consulting party for the IBR Program. At this briefing, the Cultural Resources Team will review the status of the Section 106 process for the IBR Program and welcome discussion about potential mitigation for adverse effects to historic built environment properties.

The IBR Program is a renewal of the Columbia River Crossing (CRC) project, which was suspended by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in 2014. The IBR Program, which was initiated in 2019, would replace the aging Interstate Bridge across the Columbia River with a modern, seismically resilient multimodal structure. The proposed infrastructure improvements are located along a 5-mile stretch of the Interstate 5 (I-5) corridor in Portland, Oregon, and Vancouver, Washington. Additional details about the IBR Program, including information about historic resources and environmental review processes, are available at the program website: www.interstatebridge.org.

Section 106 and Consulting Party Status

The Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) review process for the IBR Program is co-lead by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). As co-lead Federal agencies, FHWA and FTA are responsible for compliance with Section 106 and its implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800 (Protection of Historic Properties). The Section 106 process requires federal agencies to consider the effects on historic properties of projects they carry out, assist, fund, permit, license, or approve throughout the country, and to afford consulting parties the opportunity to comment.

The Portland Historic Landmarks Commission is one of more than thirty Section 106 consulting parties for the IBR Program. Other consulting parties include federal agencies, federally recognized tribes, state and local government agencies, and nonprofit organizations with a demonstrated legal, economic, or historic preservation interest in the Program. All Section 106 consulting parties are entitled to share perspectives, receive and review information, offer ideas, and consider possible solutions together with our federal co-leads, FHWA and FTA, and other consulting parties. Opportunities for the Commission to receive information and provide input include one-on-one meetings such as the April 8, 2024, briefing; regularly scheduled virtual meetings with the IBR Program, the federal co-leads, and other Section 106 consulting parties; document review via our online portal.

Please note that the Section 106 process is separate from the Type IV Demolition Review required for the proposed removal of the Interstate Bridge (northbound), which is a City of Portland Historic Landmark. Therefore, the Type IV Demolition Review will be pursued independently from the Section 106 process.

Information shared and discussed in the informational briefing on April 8, 2024, will be focused exclusively on the Section 106 process within the context of the Commission's role as a Section 106 consulting party for the IBR Program.

Effects to Historic Built Environment Properties in Oregon

Within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) for the IBR program, federal co-leads FHWA and FTA have identified several historic built environment properties in Oregon and crossing the Oregon and Washington border that are eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The IBR Program shared the boundaries of the APE and a summary of the NRHP-eligible or -listed properties with the Commission in our last briefing, which was held on October 9, 2023.

As part of the Section 106 process for the IBR Program, FHWA and FTA have determined that the IBR Program would have an adverse effect on five historic built environment properties in Oregon that are eligible for or listed in the NRHP. These are the Jantzen Beach Moorage, Jantzen Beach Water Tank, the Harbor Shops (Anchor Bar and Dotty's), and the two Interstate Bridges (Table 1). The nature of the adverse effects to these properties will be described in more detail during our presentation, as a precursor to a discussion around potential mitigation.

Mitigation for Historic Built Environment Properties

Because the adverse effects to Oregon's NRHP-eligible and -listed historic built environment properties are known, we are able to begin discussing mitigation for these effects. Under Section 106, mitigation measures are intended to remedy, offset, or compensate for adverse effects, and they can take many forms. During our presentation, we will present several types or categories of mitigation that could be considered for adverse effects to historic built environment properties under the IBR Program. However, these are just starting points for conversation. Following the presentation, we will welcome you to share your feedback on potential mitigation and to offer your own suggestions for measures that are in the public interest and commensurate with the IBR Program's adverse effects to historic built environment properties.

Programmatic Agreement

Agreed-upon mitigation measures will ultimately be included in the IBR Program's Programmatic Agreement (PA). The first draft of this document, which does not yet include mitigation measures for adverse effects to historic built environment properties, will be shared with Section 106 consulting parties in approximately three weeks. City of Portland staff can help the Commission coordinate sharing their feedback on this document with the IBR Program.

Contact Information

We appreciate the Commission's participation as a Section 106 consulting party and look forward to continued collaboration. Should the Commission have any questions or concerns, please email us at CulturalResources@interstatebridge.org.