

July 5, 2022

To: Mayor McEnerny-Ogle and Councilmembers
Cc: Rebecca Kennedy, Deputy Director, Community Development Department
From: Chair Ramos and members of the Transportation and Mobility Commission
Re: Interstate Bridge Replacement Program Modified Locally Preferred Alternative

Mayor and Council-

The City of Vancouver Transportation and Mobility Commission (TMC) submits this letter in full support of the Vancouver City Council's consideration of the Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR) Program's recommendation for a Modified Locally Preferred Alternative (MLPA). We outline our recommendations for how key components must be designed during the Supplemental Environmental Impact Study process to best serve the Vancouver community and foster a vibrant regional future for all.

- **Replacement of the existing I-5 Bridge** between Vancouver and Portland is paramount to the prosperity of our communities across the region. All infrastructure must be seismically resilient to ensure preparedness and safety.
 - **Active transportation** facilities must be easy to navigate, comfortable, low-stress, and attractive mobility options for all types of users. We seek to encourage active transportation and a reduction of vehicles on the roadway.
 - We support the high-capacity transit recommendation of **light rail with an I-5 adjacent alignment and terminating south of E. Evergreen Blvd.**, which will improve connectivity across the region for jobs, health and human services, education, greenspaces, housing, and other essential services. Transit must be designed to support frequent and reliable service and allow future extension if desired by the community. Reliability and frequency are foundational to change behavior.
 - **Variable Rate Tolling** is a necessary source of funding for the project. Programs that provide toll mitigations and exemptions for low-income users of the corridor must be included to ensure more equitable outcomes. We urge you to also consider the impact on middle-income households.
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- **Freight mobility** is a critical element of our region's economy. Design of interchanges, the bridge crossing, and access roads within the Program area must not hinder the safe and efficient movement of freight.

The Transportation and Mobility Commission doubles-down on centering **climate and equity** in all design options. The need for robust climate adaptation and mitigation strategies cannot be overstated in combating climate change. Our region has experienced a variety of climate disasters, including smoke from forest fires, ice storms, drought, and heat waves. This project has potential to set national leadership to achieve carbon neutral and ecologically sound infrastructure.

Delivery of equitable outcomes for historically excluded communities is nonnegotiable. When the most vulnerable in our community are strong, we all prosper. People-centered infrastructure and programs will advance this priority. Anti-displacement strategies to keep current residents in place and that provide opportunity for future generations to have direct access to improvements this Program will deliver are crucial to overall success. Relatedly, we urge Council and the IBR Program to highlight the importance of this corridor to regional jobs. This Program must enhance access to employment for all.

Finally, we champion transparency, accountability, and substantive engagement with the community and a variety of public and private sector stakeholders. The TMC looks forward to working with City and Program staff to identify design solutions and strategies for our local street system and opportunities for community enhancement in this project of monumental importance. Let's deliver for the community today and for generations to come.

Eduardo Ramos, Chair
City of Vancouver Transportation and Mobility Commission
