

**Capital Grants Review Committee Meeting**

April 29, 2014 9 to 11 a.m.

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**In attendance:** Councilor Harrington, Councilor Craddick, Brian Vaughn, Gayle Killam, Mike Zilis (Chair), Norman Penner, Dave Stewart, Julie DiLeone

**Staff in attendance:** Mary Rose Navarro, Heather Nelson Kent, Oriana Quackenbush

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**Welcome**

Mike Zilis, Committee Chair, welcomed the committee members and thanked them for attending. The agenda for this meeting is a continuation of the application review agenda from the April 24<sup>th</sup> meeting. In addition to reviewing the three projects not yet discussed Mary Rose Navarro clarified some committee recommendations from the previous meeting.

**Decision making**

This committee has always been able to reach consensus on the funding recommendations. Based on some concerns in the last meeting the committee discussed what to do if they are unable to reach consensus in this round. It was clarified that the committee may use votes instead of consensus, which has been discussed but not implemented in previous years. The committee clarified with the Councilors present what would be most helpful for the Metro Council if they do not reach consensus.

The Councilors clarified that they do not need a unanimous recommendation and that what would likely be the most helpful to the Council in making their decision is to know the committee's thoughts on the projects. If there is not consensus, this can be broken down into majority and minority thoughts or recommendations.

**Clarifying recommendations from April 24th meeting****Whitaker Ponds**

The committee confirmed that they would recommend funding for this project even if Portland Parks & Recreation can't do the green street as requested by the committee. The committee does want to nudge the City into doing the green street and are willing to increase the funding recommendation to do so (up to one-third of the total project cost). Portland Parks needs to come back to Metro with a cost estimate for this in time to bring a specific award amount to the Metro Council. The committee would like staff to express to them that if there was a choice, the committee sees the sidewalk extension as a more important element than the green street.

**Beaver Creek Fish Passage and Restoration**

It was confirmed that the committee is okay with using the Stark Street and Troutdale Road culverts as match. Metro would be funding close to 100% of the Cochran culvert. The committee noted that they approved this match because all three culverts are connected with the outcome of fish passage to the upper basin of Beaver Creek.

### **Siskiyou Pathway**

The committee offered more direction in terms of the precedent set in funding the trail project that crosses private land.

- Connection to a larger bike/pedestrian trail network
- Appropriate design standards used
- Community support and expressed need for the connection.
- The trail will connect people to a nature experience (the trail will connect to Rocky Butte and Gateway Green via Halsey).
- Though it crosses private property, the trail has the look and feel of public access. This project accomplishes this through signage and the community knowledge of the site.
- The high school's relationship to the site builds awareness of stewardship issues.

### **One North Community Courtyard**

The chair wanted to check in with the committee prior to the conversation with the developer to make sure the subcommittee and staff has enough direction prior to meeting with the applicant team. If the applicant addresses the concerns and/or conditions raised by the committee, is there enough support to recommend this project for funding?

Committee members revisited some of the concerns and strengths of the project. The committee confirmed they are open to recommending this project for funding if the developer can:

- Lower the funding request.
- Make the plaza 'feel natural'.
- Ensure it will be property maintained. Would the plaza be maintained by the building owners or tenants?

### **Application review**

#### **10. Gateway Green**

Recommendation: To be determined at June 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. Potential conditions of approval include:

- Work out a restoration implementation plan that includes site preparation. Determine how this is funded. The committee may be open to funding the site preparation based on the implementation plan.
- Potentially adjust the budget if water infrastructure is only to be used for water play. The committee is okay funding it for restrooms and drinking fountains but not irrigation. The committee is willing to fund more on restoration and site preparation if needed. This category of budget could be called 'revegetation'.
- Include a plan for wayfinding and access signs. Metro grant funding can be used to implement wayfinding signs.
- Have a governance structure in place. Have a Certified Public Accountant work with the organization to set up financial policies that Metro is comfortable with.
- Phase funding with benchmarks. Determine the final grant award based on match secured in 2015, in time to award any unused funding in the 2016 grant cycle.

#### **Strengths**

- restoration
- community support and a grassroots effort
- Important to put this land into public use
- This seed money is needed to achieve a larger vision
- Supporting habitat connectivity is an important outcome

## Concerns

- How the site will be managed and maintained by Portland Parks & Recreation.
- Conflicts of uses between bikers and park users.
- The access is difficult to find. Wayfinding is important from the transit center to the site as well as markings on the trail including for the train and highway.
- The size of the nature play area within an isolated area was questioned.
- Fundraising is a risk. What if they don't raise the match funds?
- There were concerns about the fiscal management ability of this small organization. Is there a way to phase funding with benchmarks?
- Water infrastructure funding is not attractive if it is only for the future water play area and irrigation. It was noted that hand watering may be more effective for this type of planting.
- No clear implementation plan for the restoration. It doesn't appear to include site preparation.

## Nature play discussion

- The committee had a wide range of opinions on this topic including whether nature play is a good choice for the site and location within the park.
- The committee is not comfortable funding water utility for nature play purpose, they would rather pay for restoration. However, if the water infrastructure is needed for another reason, such as a restroom or drinking fountains, then they would be comfortable funding it.
- They finally determined that they were comfortable including nature play and wouldn't question the design or budget with the exception of the water utility line item.

## Restoration discussion

- The habitat planning was thoughtful. The application included extensive maps and an ecological treatment plan that Brian Vaughn was asked to review.
- There was a concern that it looks like the planting budget is missing site preparation and an implementation plan. Be clear about outcomes for each of the individual restoration areas.
- They will be seeking restoration funds elsewhere as match.
- It seems like supporting habitat connectivity is an important early outcome.

## Budget discussion

- Discussion of specific line items in the budget. Are these items for Metro's funds?
- They could redirect some portions of the funding to signage.
- The applicant is likely asking for these specific elements from us because they are seeking funding from East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District for restoration and from the bike community for bike related elements.
- This is the largest request the committee has received that was not an acquisition.
- It was determined that the construction access costs are a keystone to completing the project and the fencing is needed because of the railroad.

## Potential budget adjustments discussed

- Seek more information and thinking about restoration implementation and site prep.
- Could they put the funds for temporary irrigation into site prep? Metro and the Bureau of Environmental Services could help develop the implementation plan.

## Success indicators

- The site is being used

## 11. John Inskeep Environmental Learning Center

Recommendation: full funding with following conditions

- Build into the scope of work the access to the site including signage from the rest of the campus and improving the look and feel of the parking area and entry.
- Include Metro staff in the planning and design phase of the project and get approval at 30% and 90%. Metro staff will look for cost saving opportunities and ensure that the intent of the grant is fulfilled. Metro staff will review and approve a budget that includes the specific line items that Metro funds will pay for. The budget as submitted with Metro funding going to line items for design contingency, contractor general conditions, bonds and insurance, and overhead and profit is not acceptable.
- Landscape budget seems pretty high and could use more specificity. Direct any savings from that line item to entry improvements.
- Take advantage of connection to Newell Creek Canyon. Consider how to incorporate the project into the Intertwine via the website or signage.
- Encourage off-site water treatment. Make it a condition that they will look at treating the stormwater off the parking lot that flows through this site in a future master plan. Encourage a retrofit at the high school.

Strengths

- The site visit helped clarify the project and demonstrated community support.
- It would help the watershed overall.
- It could be a catalyst for that area for Environmental Education.
- They have a large support network at both the local and high level, the committee doesn't think the site will fall back to not being maintained.

Success indicators

- The site is being used by both the public and in college classes and tied into curriculum

## 12. Zenger Farm

Recommendation – funding reduced by \$17,000 with the following conditions:

- Art and the community/edible garden elements are not eligible for funding, thus the request was reduced by \$17,000.
- Staff should review financial policies and budgets to confirm financial soundness of the organization.

Public access discussion

- A concern was raised at the last meeting that the general public does not have access to this site except for scheduled hours. It was clarified that most of the programming offered at the site is available to school children and the general public free or at low cost. The Urban Grange construction will allow for more adult programming and the space will be made available for community use and meetings. The committee felt comfortable that these activities provide enough of a public benefit to be worthy of funding.

Strengths

- Based on discussion with the Bureau of Environmental Services staff the project will deliver stormwater outcomes above and beyond what is required by the Bureau's stormwater manual.
- The project will create stormwater demonstrations and enhance curriculum.
- The committee felt that the stormwater demonstration does meet the criteria of access to nature.

## Next Meeting

June 4, 2014 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Metro Regional Center Room 270

- Revisit Gateway Green budget and finalize recommendation. Document project strengths more completely.
- Discuss One North Community Plaza proposal and finalize recommendation.
- Staff will provide funding recommendation memos for projects.