



Metro

600 NE Grand Ave.
Portland, OR 97232-2736

Meeting minutes

Meeting: CORE Meeting
Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022
Time: 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Place: Zoom

Attendees

Co-Chairs: Tristan Penn; Rebecca Descombes

CORE Members: Daniela Ortiz; Anthony Deloney; Nabin Dhimal; Quincy Brown; Jamila Dozier; Wade Hopkins; Ernesto Oliva

MERC Commissioners:

CORE Liaisons: Councilor Mary Nolan; Councilor Duncan Hwang

Metro staff: Sebrina Owens-Wilson; Melissa Palavecino; Nathan Sykes; Raul Preciado Mendez;

Absent: Dañel Malan; Saara Hirsi; Brandon Culbertson; Nura Elmagbari, Maria Magallon

Welcome

Tristan welcomed everyone into space and asked that everyone introduce themselves by stating their name, pronouns, and affiliation.

Public Comment

No public comment was given.

Committee Business

CORE Bylaws Approval:

Rebecca moved to approve the CORE Bylaws
Wade seconded that motion
All others in favor.

Minutes Approval:

Wade moved to approve February meeting minutes
Rebecca seconded that motion
All others in favor.

Community Updates

Wade shared that the NE Steam Coalition would be starting their “STEAM into summer” program May 14th, at Faubion School. This is an opportunity for providers to present summer programming to youth and families.

Rebecca shared the Community resource fair at NAYA Saturday April 23rd from 11am to 2pm. Event will be held outdoors – at the NAYA Family Center, 5135 NE Columbia Blvd. Come for free information about local services for the entire family including an opportunity to apply for NAYA's newest housing development. There will be entertainment for the family, face painting and craft for kids. Food boxes, raffle prizes, COVID Vaccine (all doses) and testing. Free hot lunch.

Ernesto shared that Unite Oregon is partnering with the Coalition of Community of Color and Next Up on a ballot measure that is, dropping in May, in Multnomah and Washington County. It’s called “The Flavor Hook Oregon Kids Campaign” which is banning the sale of flavored tobacco specifically, as it targets at risk, youth and BIPOC and immigrant refugee kids. It was past, last year, and it's being challenged this year, so Unite Oregon be hosting a listening session, which is open to the public.

Metro Council Update

Councilor Nolan gave updates on Metro’s budget, and the transportation and bond investments that will be made soon around the budget. Last year Metro Council had directed Metro staff to build their budgets around equity objectives, which should focus on improving the equity of the services that are provided. Councilor Nolan was delighted to report that, that has framed the way Metro now approaches their budgets. This year each of the departments developed budget requests focused around how they will improved equity outcomes. Whether that is a higher proportion of visitors to the Expo. Center or increasing the number of Parks centers for communities of color or other things that are outcomes for the BIPOC communities around the region. Councilor Nolan expressed how wonderful it was to listen to the conversations that the department heads brought forward in this discussion. They stated that it was a new way of thinking about the budget and that it was really good work that Metro was doing. They were delighted to be part of the other two decisions that are coming up that have particular impacts on the potential for moving forward on Metro’s equity objectives. Starting with the transportation projects, highway projects and the Interstate Bridge Project, Metro Council has said, from their perspective there are very significant equity outcomes. Council would like to see any design, deliver a proportional benefit in terms of reducing commute time and cost and reducing environmental degradation in BIPOC neighborhoods. This is a different way of looking at a transportation project than has been done in the past. The other big investment area that has a very strong element of equity outcomes is in the parks in nature bond measure, which

the voters approved. Metro will be purchasing property to extend the region's trail system, and extend the regions natural habitat, as well as increase protected habitat resources so as to extend access to nature. Again, the fundamental framework for the first time is around how Metro can invest those dollars so that improvements are made so that BIPOC communities are benefiting from those investments

Quincy asked about the I-5 Interstate Rose Quarter project and wanted to know if Councilor Nolan could expand on the type of equity agenda items that Metro is uplifting and how those relate differently to the some of the current work being done by ODOT and the Port of Portland.

Councilor Nolan responded that they were referencing the bridge project over the Columbia. But that that Quincy was right to point out that the Rose Quarter Bridge also has significant equity impacts. They sated that there are different equity issues between the two projects. With the Rose quarter, Metro has been partnering with Albina Vision about restorative investments in the historic Albina neighborhood, which was decimated by the original construction of I-5 freeway through that corridor. Metro worked with Albina Vision, the city of Portland and Multnomah County to assure that in that project ODOT will be investing in recovering land that can be redeveloped in a way that restores the neighborhood connection in that area. The bridge project is a bit different because there is a key element of the project around transit across the Columbia River which Metro has been insisting on as the project is moving along. It would be an extensive expansion of transit, most likely in the form of extending the Max across to Vancouver in ways that have the potential to increase use of transit for commute by a ten-fold. Which would be particularly beneficial for folks who are transit dependent, folks who don't own cars, can't afford cars, and who really need to rely on transit for getting to work. Metro pushing to have transit, whether it's Max line, or what's called bus r rapid transit, which are express buses well into Clark County, which is seeing substantial increases in its BIPOC population.

Quincy followed up his question by stating that in the last effort in terms of expanding more transit options to Clark County via the Columbia River, the state of Washington pulled out of the project, and they lost a lot of money for Metro voters. Quincy then asked if I the state of Washington was more open this time around with that concept, and if they, saw same challenges happening now that happened 10 years ago?

Councilor Nolan stated that Quincy was an astute observer, and responded that Washington is not a monolith any more than Oregon is. However there are particularly different perspectives from the city of Vancouver and Clark County. The city of Vancouver is decidedly welcoming of transit cross the bridge. The Clark County, again, as evidenced by the Clark County Board of Commissioners, is not welcoming of transit for this project. That being said the city of Vancouver has a seat at the decision-making table and Clark County does not but that doesn't mean we can ignore the push from Clark County. But with leadership from the City Council and the Mayor of Vancouver Councilor Nolan thinks that is the fundamental difference in the dynamic from 10 years ago.

Overview of Metro's Parks and Nature department and voter approved investment measures

Presenters: Mychal Tetteh (he/him) Parks & Nature Community Services Program Director

Presenter walked through materials.

Quincy asked his question around the administrative costs associated with the bond. He stated that he had seen that there had been a slow process in terms of getting funds out to communities, and also a high administration cost. He asked Mychal to speak on what are some of the ways to mitigate that as the bond continues, and what goals were in terms of percentage of money spent on the admin costs in question.

Mychal responded that that was one of the things that was challenging related to bond implementation. He explained that the bond spending essentially ramps up through some of the refinement processes, these processes are really staff intensive at the front end and that it is in advance of getting a lot of those funds out the door. So instead of it being a straight line graph, where you're administrative costs are flat throughout the course of time, it's actually a little bit more of a front-end cost where staff have to really advance the work. Once the programs are up and running, the administrative expenses decreased significantly in the last few years of the life of the bond measure. They fully expect administrative expenses, with the 2019 parks and nature bond measure to do the same. The 2006 natural areas bond measure's administrative costs were under 10%, and they expect the 2019 parks and nature bond measure to be close to that over the life of the bond. Mychal also explained that this bond was a top to bottom overhaul of how they were doing their work. They promised voters, that they would prioritize Racial Equity, community engagement and climate resilience in bond implementation. This means building 6 new bond programs with new criteria that reflect the goals and values outlined in the measure. Their oversight Committee, staff and Council are paying really close attention to these goals as they move forward with the work.

Quincy asked if Mychal could speak to how the Parks and Nature department looks to mitigate some of the issues that communities of color face. For example pollution, water, quality challenges, and how that relates to some of the other work that Metro is doing.

Mychal responded that one of the opportunities he gets to share as the executive sponsor of the levy renewal team is the way in which what Metro offers through the Parks and Nature department is actually a really unique value to the region. It is work that no other jurisdiction alone is able to do and it's also uniquely valuable based on some of the trends that are being seen in the times that we live in. When we think about the amount of challenging climate that has been seen in the weather. For example hotter summers, and other more extreme conditions, like the cold snap here in the past week. Something as simple as having an arborist on staff who is going to be able to get out to sites that Metro

has already had an opportunity to assess, and figure out where the greatest potential is for hazard trees, that not only helps Metro with our ability to ensure that those parks and natural areas are safe for visitors. But as we move into a dry summer, those are some of the same places where we're going to be looking to make sure that there isn't a buildup of too much of the kind of fuels that could increase the potential for fire risk. When we think about the ways in which the work that we do to protect and restore both natural areas and places that help to provide the conditions for the headwaters in our region, this is something again, that any number of our individual jurisdictions can't do alone. Metro as an agency and Parks and Nature as a department is uniquely positioned to help bring those stakeholders together. And help cut through any of the differences in terms of some of those jurisdictional barriers, and continue to lead with racial equity in ways that those individual jurisdictions may not be positioned to do so. So when we talk about what the Parks and Nature department is able to provide it's actually uniquely valuable. At the same time, when we think about our levy renewal in particular, it's actually not going to be increasing the taxes folks have but instead will allow us to continue to provide safe and accessible places for people to connect with nature in ways that they find to be valuable.

Introduction to the garbage and recycling system facilities plan project

Presenters: *Gloria Pinzón (she/they) Waste Prevention and Environmental Services Luis Sandoval (he/him) Waste Prevention and Environmental Services*

Presenters walked through materials.

Rebecca asked to look at slide six again. Which depicted the groups of people they were looking to recruit for the project committee. She asked if the project committee would also be open to folks who didn't have as much experience or knowledge advancing racial equity, or in environmental justice. She stated that those types of requirements, especially for BIPOC communities could be significant barriers for folks to participate.

Gloria responded that they will be considering lived experience a valuable part of someone's participation and connection to the project, and that they have more detailed list that includes youth and adults ages 16 and up from black indigenous or other communities of color, individuals who live, work, or attend school or worship in any of the 3 counties that are part of our region. The slide depicts very general points, due to their time constraint. They have a one page information sheet where they list more specifically that they are also looking for Individuals living with low incomes or disabilities, individuals with personal or professional experience, knowledge or expertise, advancing racial equity and environmental justice. Or people who consider themselves or other people consider them community leaders and individuals who participate in things like community education programs, waste collection events, nonprofit boards, other committees, student groups, community led groups who volunteer their time to support their community. They

would like members of this project committee to have a blend of any of these skills and characteristics. Gloria explained that second bullet point listed as people with experience or knowledge, advancing Racial Equity, or environmental justice is because they want to recognize that the project group will be jumping into topics that have to do with government decision making processes. They have a generally short timeline for such a large plan, and that in order for an individual to be able to be as involved and feel as included as possible, it might be beneficial for them to have had experience going through these sort of processes. However, it's not required.

Tristen asked what the things were as they think forward that they are worried about in this process. He was curious to know what the potential barriers that they thought might happen at any phase in the process, or any general concerns they had.

Luis responded that there were a series of risks involved in this project. The timeline being one. The timeline is tight for the project this size and there will be a lot of interest from various stakeholder groups, like the private solid waste industry, local governments, to the community at large. So it could be that they don't have enough time to finish what they are wanting to accomplish by next summer. However this doesn't mean that they won't have a plan, but for example, they may have to delay some aspects that need more work. They will also be working with a new contractor. They did an RFP process (request for proposals) which will be closing soon. So once that happens they will be moving into the selection process for a contractor that have never worked with before. Typically they don't work closely with contractors, so there's a possibility that it doesn't go well. There is also a chance that at any point the Metro Council directs them in a different direction because of things they learn along the way. That being said, there are lot of pending projects that have been put on pause, because they are waiting for this plan to guide them in those projects, and that includes a transfer station in the southern part of the region in Oregon City; that is at capacity currently and they are trying to hold off before making any decisions about that transfer station until this plan is complete. For this reason it is important for them to finish the plan promptly.

Gloria also shared from her perspective, of working on the community engagement side that a barrier she sees is working within a government environment. There is always the risk, and the challenge with how they set these very important goals to bring in new voices into the decision-making process, and put potentially not prioritized those voices as they would like to. Due to the fact that traditional stakeholders are very used to having a stronger, influence more influential voice. And so for them as an agency and as a project team they have to continually keep in mind that balancing of voices. They also need to think about how to use the input from everyone and meaningfully impact a decision?

Tristen responded that he appreciate them naming their worries and also the reality of this type of project. He also mentioned that he felt it was important that they not cut corners as he has seen this happen before with tight time constraints, especially when it came to the communities input. He also had a follow up question around the FRP process. He asked

what the initial ask was, and how detailed it was? He also wanted to know how many proposals they had received.

Luis responded that because Metro already has the regional waste plan they did have a strong framework that centers Racial Equity. He also stated that he appreciated Tristan's comment because even with the Racial Equity framework they still needed to be aware of all the things that might slip through the cracks. As for the RFP process he stated that it would be closing in the next two days so they didn't yet know how many proposals they had gotten in. Because this is a large project they anticipated the traditional engineering firms, and consulting firms that work on large scale planning projects to apply. However they did want to try and make it as open as possible. So they did outreach to hundreds of COBID (Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity) certified firms, some that didn't seem like they would fit or have any interest in this RFP. But they decided to error on the side of caution and send out the opportunity to as many folks as possible. The scope of work for the plan is very detailed in what Metro is expecting. Which was difficult because they also want the contractor to bring their experience and their advice on this project. The RFP does have expected deliverables, and some of them include, for example, familiarizing themselves with the agency's Racial Equity framework. They also struggled on whether or not to include the budget in the RFP. They were hesitant to put a number, because then every proposal comes in at that number. But in the end we did put a target budget which of \$400,000.

Quincy commented that he had recently seen a lot of public projects that had an Equity consultant brought in to manage some of the equity concerns around construction. He asked if this was something they would have as well. Or if they had thought about having someone whose job was to work with the construction team and contractor to ensure that equity is being brought up in the process as it comes to job training, partnerships and subcontracting, as well as connecting the strategic plan to advance Racial Equity to this project.

Luis responded that as of right now, because they were still in the planning phase and not building anything they didn't have any DEI contractors signed on. He also stated that he did not think they would be getting a DEI contractor as the Waste Prevention and Environmental Services has its own internal DEI committee and Metro also has its own DEI program.

Sebrina also shared that the DEI program at Metro manages the construction career pathways program which is involved in all of Metro's capital projects. This ensures there is a Racial Equity strategy to make sure that women and people of color have access to the jobs on Metro's projects.

Adjourn