Meeting summary

Meeting:	Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants Pilot Program Design and Review Committee Meeting #9
Date:	Tuesday April 26, 2022
Time:	4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Place:	Zoom
Purpose:	Guidebook and Request for Proposal development
Outcome(s):	Develop the program Guidebook and Request for Proposal

Attendees

Committee Members
Kevin Hughes, he/him, City of Hillsboro Parks and Recreation Department
Alisa Chen, they/them, Grow Portland
Jairaj Singh, they/he, Unite Oregon
Blanca Gaytan Farfan, she/her, East County Rising Community Projects
Jeffrey Lee, he/him, (City of Portland, BES)
Theresa Huang, she/her, Urban Greenspaces Institute

Absent: *Anthony M. Bradley*

Staff
Crista Gardner, Metro
Brandon Goldner, Metro
Humberto Marquez Mendez, Metro
Gabrielle Brown, Metro (PSU Fellow)
Allison Brown, JLA Public Involvement
Travis Rumohr, JLA Public Involvement

Welcome and Introductions

Allison Brown, JLA Public Involvement, opened the meeting and reviewed Zoom logistics. Crista Gardner, Metro, shared a land acknowledgement. Allison informed committee members that the group would be working in the same Mural board from the last meeting. She then asked if there were any access needs. Allison then reviewed the group agreement and asked everyone to be mindful of pacing.

Crista noted that the group is attempting to find a better time to meet, but over the summer months, meetings should be less frequent. Crista discussed the conflict-of-interest form, and asked members to note any other conflicts via email. Crista noted that Renee would be sending out a poll to organize some meetups for lunch or coffee.

Allison shared the general agenda and asked if there were any questions or concerns before the meeting got started. Crista issued a reminder that the guidebook has been posted as a reference, and an explained what it is and how it will be used.

Crista explained that the discussion would begin with questions about funding thresholds and amounts. Gabrielle Brown, Metro, shared her screen with the Mural board, while Allison shared the

link to the board in the chat. The assumption with the discussion was that all committee members had read the materials prior to the meeting and the meeting would be about discussion and decision making.

Project Development Framework
The group is asked to discuss whether this in alignment with stated goals and values, as well as what the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and concerns are with this framework?

- **Allison Brown:** Does anybody need additional information to Parse through this or respond?
- **Committee Member** asked for the link to the previous Mural board to review.
- **Gabrielle Brown:** Was the video helpful? What outstanding questions do you have?
    o **Committee Member:** It was helpful, I think the last ones were longer, but this one was kind of perfect for explaining something complex. I could rewind it and watch it again.
- **Committee Member:** I'm looking at the memo, the section on the model summary, there's the breakdown of the small projects, and bullet point B is talking about community priority survey, could you remind me what that is? Is that just the general idea collection?
    o **Crista Gardner:** The way that we have broken this down is two or more ways of collecting ideas: One is collecting ideas for some of those smaller projects, another way is collecting ideas that are more general in nature. Jurisdictions have capital improvement plans which have a list of desired projects in their jurisdiction – many have on those lists for example upgrading playgrounds. Say a community has an interest in creating a nature play area, it may be possible to go about finding that middle-ground between the community and the jurisdictions plans for a project proposal.
- **Committee Member (on the board):** Whether this funding opportunity would be multi-year and large enough for CBOs to increase capacity as well as retain staff who are working on these projects.
    o **Crista Gardner:** There's two sideboards I would mention, one is a 10 percent overhead cap that is written into the legislation, in these grants includes things like rent, utilities, and the basic structure for CBOs, but doesn't include staff time. Staff time can only be paid for through this grant program if it is directly related to building a capital project. So, it's a narrow definition of how staff time could be used. I would hesitate in saying this is a capacity grant, this pot of funding is very narrow in its application.
- **Allison Brown:** Does that help? Does it help inform how you want to recommend structuring this funding?
    o **Committee Member:** It does make it harder, that's why I'm encouraging larger pots, larger projects. With small projects, all that happens is something like a contractor gets hired to paint a mural to beautify an area. I think going big and being able to keep staff to monitor and engage in that project is better. Metro is starting to do that with other projects in the garbage and recycle programs. Larger funding sustains staffs and gets projects done. Something I want to uplift coming from a CBO
- **Committee Member:** Coming back to the concern that Jairaj had, some of the CBOs that I work with are trying to get over the capacity limit by starting programs that train BIPOC youth, that gives them capacity. I know that this is limited in paying staff, wondering if a job training program could fit into the narrow definition.

- o **Crista Gardner:** Yes, it could fit into the definition.
- **Allison Brown:** What does the group think about scaling up to build trust? What are the perspectives on these splits in funding?
    - o **Committee Member:** What Jairaj and Theresa pointed out resonates with me as well. I don't have my hands in grant making as much so don't see that part,
- **Committee Member:** What is the total amount of money in this program?
    - o Crista Gardner responded: – We are looking at somewhere between 1 and 4 million dollars is going to be the pot. Typically, the cost for the large projects is $150k to $1 million for large projects, and $10k to $50k for small projects. You can see the range of projects that larger and smaller that could be supported by something like say a $2 million pot.
- **Allison Brown:** I'm hearing a value that CBOs need to have the capacity to take this on. That isn't contractor driven or too small to support staff development or staff retention. Sounds like it's hard to pin down what's the right number or what's the right size, but that that's a value that folks have in how funding is split up.
    - o The group nods and generally agrees.
- **Allison Brown:** The central question is "how does funding get divided up, what's the right balance, are there thresholds"?
    - o **Crista Gardner:** *Yes, and right now it's rather broad. It doesn't need to be specific right now. Before we could set thresholds at $50k to $250k for large projects, and small projects around $10k to $50k, those may be logical thresholds. Looking at how many projects this pot would be able to support based on the funding levels.*
    - o **Gabrielle Brown:** Another way to look at it, is do you want 10 big and 10 small or lots of small and a few big, etc. and then begin to fill in based on that. What is the vibe on project size?
    - o *Theresa Huang responded: I feel like a lot of people are fuzzier in their head about how much a larger project would cost, I can clear it up a little bit, with the organization that I am on the board for the heavy missionary work, which range $50k to $80k. That's just one example.*
- **Allison Brown:** what works? Are CBOs able to deliver on large projects or do smaller projects seem more feasible? What have you seen work or be successful?
    - o **Committee Member:** Wouldn't that be guided by how strong the partners are also? If they can display a lot of partnership support, I would think so, but then again, I haven't seen it firsthand ye and haven't deal with that side of things, so I don't have any concrete thoughts on that. If we have too many large or small is there a consideration that our staff isn't able to support?
    - o **Crista Gardner:** A city with 2 large projects and small staff capacity (Fairview for example), that's going to be hard. But on Metro's side, we are checking in, monitoring, doing site visits, making sure funding is being used well, it won't be a problem with metros size, but could be a problem with smaller size jurisdictions.
    - o **Gabrielle Brown:** Following up on that, some projects have an option for cost savings. The larger the project the more individual tailored it has to be. The larger the burden on the agency/CBO etc.
- **Committee Member:** Clarifying about capacity of jurisdictions, like some city's being so small. If a community organization were to be selected and gets the money, if there's a partnership with a jurisdiction, would they get that type of funding? Would it be the same?
    - o **Crista Gardner:** Yes, but it depends on what budget is submitted. It's up to the two organizations to divide the staff time and the staff costs and it depends on the skills and abilities of the two organizations and those they have on staff.

- o **Committee Member:** From my experience, there are a lot of organizations doing good work, but capacity issues are a big deal. In thinking about the cities out here, they are already so limited on their current staff capacity.
- **Committee Member:** Thinking about appropriate balance between funding pots, in my experience from government work, the larger the public dollar amount is the much more difficult to implement. If we want projects to err on the side of being more successful it seems like it would be smart to scale it to smaller side projects. My suggested breakdown would be 1/3 to 2/3 that's just me thinking about large projects that Hillsboro has going into construction now. It adds complexities and layers of jurisdictions involved.
- **Crista Gardner***:* Some options: $2M pot: 1) 1/3 large; 2/3 small 2) 10 projects of up to $100,000 and 4 projects of up to $250,000 3) 15 projects of up to $100,000 and 2 projects of up to $250,000
  - o Some options: $1M pot: 1) 1/3 large; 2/3 small 2) 5 projects of up to $100,000 and 2 projects of up to $250,000 3) 7 projects of up to $100,000 and 1 project of up to $250,00.
- **Allison Brown:** Looking at these possibilities and numbers, what do you kind of like? What feels right at this point?
  - o **Committee Member**: I'm more on the side of more small projects. There's a lot more potential to help elevate the smaller CBOs and increase collaboration between them. Feel it can reach the community a lot quicker. Closer to the 1/3 large 2/3 small projects.
- **Crista Gardner:** Is there kind of agreement there on the 1/3 large and 2/3 small?
  - o **Committee Member**: My question is what has been successful in the past for Metro?
    - ▪ **Crista Gardner:** Small scale has been successful in the past, yes. We haven't funded many through this capital grants projects that were small, but through our restoration and nature education grant we have had success working with CBOs on small projects.
- **Committee Member:** It's important to think about other things that impact cost as well. Materials, gas, and other prices are really high right now. A few of our projects we are working on right now are looking at 25% more expensive right now.
- **Allison Brown:** How do we feel about the 2/3 and 1/3?
  - o **Committee Member gave a thumbs up.**
  - o **Committee Member:** I think it should be flipped. Some more large projects, Capital projects need larger funding. I would encourage a sustained approach if we are trying to engage organizations that haven't been involved in capital projects previously. I am a three, I can move on if we need.
  - o **Committee Member:** I'm having a hard time thinking of groups that I know that would want to do projects considering what amount of work would have to go into things.
  - o **Committee Member:** There are lots of parts for me that are out of my expertise, so it's hard for me to weigh in too much. I like the fact that we are going to be the ones that are reviewing and vetting projects. But where it comes to sustainability and providing that support to a CBO, that's the part I don't have my hands in enough.

Alisa Chen arrived at the meeting. Allison noted that the group was not coming to a consensus and suggested the group take a break. The committee then broke for 10 minutes before moving on to the remaining topics of discussion.

10-minute break.

The group returned from break and Gabrielle shared the Mural Board from the last meeting. Allison noted that this is where the rest of the meeting would be spent.

Goals and Values
Gabrielle addressed the comments made at the previous meeting and noted that she made some edits trying to capture what was said. She then asked whether or not those edits captured the group's thoughts and whether they approved of the changes. The group began going through each section to determine if the changes were acceptable, beginning with Process Goals.

Process Goals
Allison performed a temperature check on the changes, asking for thumbs up if the group approved of the changes.

Committee signaled approval for Process Goals.

Targeted Populations
Allison performed a temperature check on the changes, asking for thumbs up if the group approved of the changes.

Committee signaled approval for Targeted Populations.

Climate Resilience
Gabrielle noted that the changes were essentially agreed upon at the previous meeting, which reduced the five criteria to four.

Committee signaled approval for Climate Resilience.

Program Criteria
Gabrielle noted that this topic was very difficult to come to consensus on and that the group had agreed wordsmithing was needed. She then proposed that two options, the group could make edits on their own and then attempt to come to consensus, or Metro could work on edits based on the group's feedback and then hold a vote at the next meeting on said edits.

The committee signaled a desire to utilize the latter option of Metro making edits and holding a vote at the next meeting.

Funding Categories
Gabrielle reviewed the decision to split the grant funding into multiple funding streams. She then moved on to the question of how the funds should be divided, by budget or by type. She noted that based on the conversations in the previous meeting, the group had decided that splitting by budget would probably be preferable but had also talked about project type as a n option for splitting it, which is more difficult. The topic of discussion would only be how the pot would be split, with other elements that play a role discussed at a later time.

- **Gabrielle Brown:** Is budget a fair way to divide it?
    - **Committee Member:** Worried and wondering does it make sense to have a certain amount of projects be a certain type to meet community needs?

- **Crista Gardner:** To review the process by which projects are decided on, first uses criteria to vet at idea collection phase for proposals for funding. Secondarily, the budget is looked at in terms of ideal, meeting some of the smaller projects and some of the larger projects. Finally, the type is looked at to ensure each one of the different types of projects listed in the guidebook is represented.
- **Gabrielle Brown:** I'll add to that too, one of the main reasons we conceptualized splitting by budget, is because it reflects project development processes. Bigger difference when developing a large vs small project than projects of different types.
  - o **Allison Brown:** Was most of the group cool with funds being divided by budget? With that additional context, has anyone changed their minds or what?
    - **Committee Member:** I'm fine with budget-wise, but I think there is value in the other way by type.
    - **Committee Member:** Not everything will fit by "type", but everything has a budget and can be divided.

Committee signaled approval dividing by budget.

Grant Limits
Gabrielle then moved the conversation to Grant Limits, and noted that this was the same area of discussion as the first part of the meeting.

- **Crista Gardner:** What I heard in our last hour is small up to 100k and large up to 250k, is there agreement with the group on that?
  - o **Committee Member:** I'm starting to question even more, think it should be 250k to a 1 million.
  - o **Committee Member:** My expertise isn't in what it takes projects like this to get completed. Some examples would help me understand. What is the breakdown of overhead, and how the funding is broken up between groups, etc.
- **Allison Brown:** I'm sensing a tension that we need to name. We need a little more information to have an informed conversation about that. People are saying, generally, "I'm not an expert", that's the feel. What else would be helpful for the group to have an informed conversation about his and speak from your positions. What would help you?
  - o **Crista Gardner:** Would sample funding proposals be helpful?
  - o **Committee Member:** Maybe we can have some conversations with past grantees to see their relations with capital. Digging up some of those perspectives might help inform things.
    - **Committee Member:** I agree, I think it would be helpful to learn more from other CBOs that have done capital projects and hear from them. Also getting sample funding proposals would be helpful.
  - o Theresa Huang commented: I think getting some sample proposals that are up there toward higher or bigger project budgets.

Allison reviewed what was successful and provided a Jamboard link in the chat for committee members to use in the next few weeks if they have additional thoughts.

Next Steps and Closing

Allison and Crista closed the meeting with the following items:
- Crista noted that the next two meetings are going to be on the Mural board with the flowchart in the middle. The team will be looking at feedback on the concepts listed there. Materials will be provided prior to the meeting for review.
- Crista also noted that at the meeting next month, Humberto Marquez Mendez, Metro, will lead a discussion centered around community engagement.

Allison brings the meeting to a close and asks that everyone fill out the doodle poll centered around a new meeting time and do the homework.

Appendix A: Zoom Meeting Chat

From Brandon Goldner to All Panelists 04:29 PM

That's OK!

Thank you though!

From Willamette Falls Legacy Project to All Panelists 04:30 PM

I'm having technical difficulties. Be back soon. No microphone or sound.

From Brandon Goldner to All Panelists 04:31 PM

Sorry audio was weird, I can hear now, did you say something else?

Or was Gabrielle just making fun of me AGAIN???

☺

It was directed at meeeeeee

Kidding ☺

Whinny is the proper term, yes!

Yeah totally

From Allison Brown (she/her) to Everyone 04:47 PM

https://app.mural.co/t/natureinneighborhoodscapital3991/m/natureinneighborhoodscapital399
1/1648151204571/56c935687d314013ebd52c31e9af4c8a32d10189?sender=u720604c4696be7
19804b6136

From Gabrielle Brown (she/her/Mrs.) | Metro to All Panelists 04:55 PM

Was the video helpful? What outstanding questions do you have?

From Blanca Gaytan Farfan to All Panelists 04:56 PM

https://app.mural.co/t/natureinneighborhoodscapital3991/m/natureinneighborhoodscapital399
1/1649113734615/fd3e2036a3f2360b1cf874655f84323fb69a4dc6?sender=u95c31ce18aa0c1a48
2e35934

From Crista Gardner (she/her) to Everyone 05:26 PM

Some options: $2M pot: 1) 1/3 large; 2/3 small 2) 10 projects of up to $100,000 and 4 projects of
up to $250,000 3) 15 projects of up to $100,000 and 2 projects of up to $250,000

Some options: $1M pot: 1) 1/3 large; 2/3 small 2) 5 projects of up to $100,000 and 2 projects of up
to $250,000 3) 7 projects of up to $100,000 and 1 projects of up to $250,00

From Allison Brown (she/her) to Everyone 05:43 PM

https://app.mural.co/t/natureinneighborhoodscapital3991/m/natureinneighborhoodscapital399
1/1649113734615/fd3e2036a3f2360b1cf874655f84323fb69a4dc6?sender=u720604c4696be719
804b6136

From Gabrielle Brown (she/her/Mrs.) | Metro to All Panelists 05:47 PM

Link for Goals & Criteria Mural:

https://app.mural.co/t/natureinneighborhoodscapital3991/m/natureinneighborhoodscapital399
1/1649113734615/fd3e2036a3f2360b1cf874655f84323fb69a4dc6?sender=udb943acb45109510
e5263334

From Crista Gardner (she/her) to Everyone 06:12 PM

From our last conversation: small up to $100,000 and large up to $250,000?

From Crista Gardner (she/her) to Everyone 06:18 PM

Sample funding proposals?

From Alisa Chen (they/them) to All Panelists 06:19 PM

That would be great

From Jeffrey Lee (he/him) to Everyone 06:19 PM

Yes!

From Jairaj Singh (they/he) to All Panelists 06:19 PM

Yes 👍 I agree with Blanca's recommendation/request

From Jeffrey Lee (he/him) to Everyone 06:20 PM

Would it be beneficial to have our Metro financial person sit in (sorry, I forgot their name!) to answer our questions?
From Crista Gardner (she/her) to Everyone 06:21 PM
Melissa
From Jairaj Singh (they/he) to All Panelists 06:22 PM
👍
From Allison Brown (she/her) to Everyone 06:23 PM
https://jamboard.google.com/d/1AEZ4pa18hVWW8Rq7oXG8zb8VV65ZGcfzTai_od5bDEM/edit?usp=sharing

Appendix B: Land acknowledgement – Oversight Committee

The greater Portland area is built upon the ancestral homelands, villages and traditional use areas of multiple Indigenous tribes and bands who have stewarded these lands we cherish since time immemorial.

The lands at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia rivers have long served as a major crossroads for the economic, social and political interactions of tribal nations for thousands of years and a place of significance in the homelands and traditional territories of many tribal nations.

We owe a special acknowledgement to the many tribes and bands and their descendants who ceded these lands in treaties with the United States.

We recognize the strong and diverse tribal nations and Native communities in our region today and offer respect and gratitude for their stewardship of these lands past, present and future. Metro seeks to establish meaningful relationships and explore opportunities to collaborate and consider tribal priorities and interests in our work, including our parks and nature bond work. We are building our understanding of tribal interests in the greater Portland area as we implement our parks and nature work.

As we learn more, we hope to refine Metro's approach to land acknowledgements in the future; We recognize land acknowledgements are important and can be sensitive. We are hoping to learn more to integrate this into our work appropriately and in a good way honoring tribal interests going forward.