Meeting summary

Meeting:	Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants Pilot Program Design and Review Committee Meeting #7
Date:	Tuesday March 29, 2022
Time:	4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Place:	Zoom
Purpose:	Guidebook development
Outcome(s):	Develop the program Guidebook: Community Vote and Program Evaluation

Recording: https://vimeo.com/694550211/a91d41df9f

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
Amanda Hudson, Participatory Budgeting Oregon (PBO)
Crista Gardner, Metro
Brandon Goldner, 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, acknowledged that this is the last meeting that Amanda Hudson, PBO, has with the group. Crista then shared a land acknowledgement. Allison noted the previously agreed upon group amendment, asked the group about any access needs, and asked for people to reach out with any problems during the meeting.

Space was made for anyone to address any issues with previous meeting's summary, the summary was then approved by committee members. Allison reviewed the agenda before handing things over to Amanda Hudson, PBO.

Finalizing the Voting Criteria

Amanda Hudson, PBO, reviewed voting criteria established at the previous meeting, going slide by slide. She reviewed the big questions posed and requested feedback on the criteria. Committee members were asked to provide any thoughts on the ideas presented, as well as wordsmith and note anything they felt was left out.

How could the capital grants pilot maximize engagement, especially for target communities?
- **Committee Member**: Regarding "Address digital divide with providing hardware technology", it might be good to expand to improve software as well, because there's only so much you can do with hardware.
  - **Amanda Hudson**: What I'm hearing is add that extra piece supporting people where they are at or upgrading what's existing.
- **Committee Member**: I have one more. The first slide about climate change in communities (the target communities), we should add "communities that are "Disproportionately impacted".
- **Committee Member**: "The one thing I feel is sticking out for me is one thing about communications part...better communications that respond to community's concerns that are not necessarily the focus of the day and better ways to answer those concerns... ex) safety. I find that communities tend to fall off of the process if they feel their voices/concerns are not properly acknowledged"
- **Committee Member:** Does this feel like a representation of the thoughts you had while in committee? Anything to add to this list or wordsmith?
- **Committee Member** Might be good to include something about the technology or the process, not just ask for a vote from a team member but follow up, provide results and follow up.
  - **Amanda Hudson:** Like a feedback loop. Reporting back what people say, communicating that to the community?
  - **Committee Member:** Yes, it doesn't have to be direct communication, just sharing of information.

Distributing voting among community locations & resources
- **Committee Member:** On the second bullet point of the list "Can we adequately get an accurate picture of where all the different community groups consider locations of best convenience comfortability?" Is that bullet point talking about culturally specific sites, maybe like faith centers or community specific centers?
  - **Committee Member:** That's what I was aiming at, places where people tend to hang out, a market, church, community centers, etc.
  - **Committee Member:** I would agree, I would have said that.
- **Committee Member:** On the 4th point (There used to be a Portland Metro Equity Map book; there's also Metro's Equity Atlas (unsure if there's an electronic version or GIS layer?)), I remember seeing an online map w/ data points recently.
  - **Crista Gardner**: Yes, we have lots of maps and lots of mapping resources.
  - **Committee Member**: Provided link in chat.
- **Amanda Hudson:** Is this looking like it is starting to be complete or is there anything missing?
- **Committee Member:** One thing that came to mind for me, don't know how it will look at specific events, but asking CBOs to use their centers, hosting, or labor, sometimes it's good to pay them for that labor. Should make a note about possibly compensation.
  - **Amanda Hudson:** Speaking from PB's perspective, that is definitely a common practice.

Who is eligible to vote? How is eligibility determined?
- **Committee Member:** I would be interested in hearing from the metro staff about any concerns they have.
  - o **Crista Gardner:** We will have to go back and check with some of our specialists, such as our legal specialists, as we finalize this logistically. We might want to look at them practically, like if there are any risks of privacy that we want to take into consideration with children and underage. I would say that we will have a better answer at our next meeting or the meeting hereafter. Those are kind of my initial thoughts.
- **Committee Member:** City of Gresham just did a big survey about what funding should go toward, one of the things was submitting what you a resident or community member were voting for. They allowed voting from non-residents of Gresham and then differentiated between where people reside. May want to make a notation of age, location, where someone resides or not, considering the unhoused population, etc.

Where does the vote occur? How many events?
- **Brandon Goldner:** Low priority, but I have a question regarding potential mechanism of the vote if there's a chance to ask
- **Committee Member:** For the where questions, can I also add events that are already happening in communities
- **Committee Member:** In terms of how many events, it would be helpful to be more specific around quantity of events to target a specific community group. Just considering that turnout for a 6-year-old might look different than for a 21-year-old. Maybe think about the target focus instead of the number. I'm not quite sure I could add a full-on number to it, because I don't know how long the vote would be going for. That would be really helpful, say we have a month to execute the vote, then realistically this is the capacity that we have to execute or cohost if we are working with an existing event.
  - o **Amanda Hudson:** Seems like a clarification on the timeline would help you get into the actual numbers. Any metro staff have any idea about phase breakdowns yet?
  - o **Crista Gardner:** I think it's still I the shaping time period, haven't made any determination.
  - o **Committee Member:** Thinking about how long a vote should be, it depends on what methods of votes your doing. I don't know, off the top of my head a month-long open process. Maybe you can refer to how long surveys are open for at metro.
  - o **Crista Gardner:** Typically, 2 weeks to a month is common.
  - o **Amanda Hudson:** I would say a month is common and is good to start from.
  - o **Committee Member:** Would there be a way to check what communities are represented and who has voted, so if we are seeing only a particular group of communities is voting and we want to ensure more representation for different groups, it might also help have a plan A and plan B. Analysis that can be done while the vote is occurring could help shape how the vote continues.
  - o **Amanda Hudson:** We can use demographics, historic trends, evaluation components, and more to judge who is participating or likely participating. How much do you want people to share when they register so you can collect that information about who is voting? I think the targeted outreach that we are involved in, using forethought to reach

hard-to-reach groups right at the start is a really key way to avoid that lack of representation problem.
- **Committee Member:** And these outreach events are usually staffed by the project initiated organizations, right? or by Metro staff? I can't remember off of the top of my head.
    - o **Amanda Hudson:** It can be whatever. This comes back to the nature of the goals you set about why you're doing PB. Some of it is building community leadership, is what this group has said. Then the way we do that could be really investing resources into CBOs, grass-roots groups that have authentic leaders coming up through the process so a focus could then be "let's get these folks running these events" so that it's really community-centered with Metro folks present. If we are aligning with transparency goals maybe we want people from metro to really be the face and voice, showing that these are the people that are running your government.
- **Committee Member:** In NY's PB, "Leading up to the Assemblies and Vote Week, districts host at least 3 group outreach days (canvassing/subway) and at least 2 group phone banks."

What kind of events?
- **Committee Member:** I'd like Theresa's thoughts on going to events where things are already taking place. If we go that route, I think we should be sure to talk to the organization that's running the event to make sure we are invited.
    - o **Committee Member:** Yes, never show up without being invited.
- **Committee Member:** I think on the receiving end, especially metro as a governing body, taking the time early on to build those relationships, otherwise it could feel really transactional. There should be an effort to create more trust, be intentional, put time toward that. The other thing I didn't see on here, administering votes at tabling. Going back to Gresham's survey, they did tabling at community markets, and talked with community members as they were coming and going, there could be potential there.

Single funding pot v. multiple categories? Method of voting?
- **Committee Member** I feel like this is the part I missed last meeting... can I know what multiple categories is referring to. I didn't see notes from the 3/29 folder
- **Amanda Hudson:** It's kind of like divvying up the amounts of money and guiding the types and ideas of projects based on the goals that you are setting right now.
    - o **Committee Member:** Is there a way to allocate funding to level out the playing field for smaller community orgs?
- **Committee Member:** I think I was the one that put "I'd like the idea of multiple categories, treat it like a portfolio", I really like the idea of doing it that way, just so it can be broken down a little bit further and the committee can direct with a little more precision where it is going based on category or size.
    - o **Committee Member:** Echoing Kevin, it might bring clearer goals. It could also, if we have to form subcommittees based on these categories, that might be a good way of organizing things.

- o **Committee Member:** That's a really great point, Jeffrey, if a subcommittee is something that we all feel would help further refine people's lived experiences and expertise on this committee. It could be another great way to identify and elevate those experiences.
  - o **Amanda Hudson:** I would add a quick clarification to the idea of subcommittees, adding your different pots of money from early on would change the nature of general ideas collected. So, you could have just an open, whatever works within the funding goal, or you could line out those earmarked funds, but subcommittees are always formed in PB. So, it could be a general goal and subcommittees are sorted based on what ideas come in or earmarking would get you specific ideas.
  - o **Committee Member:** I like the latter of that, if we want to maintain the identity of this program for the future, then earmarking and clarifying where we want to dedicate our funding, I think is a good idea.
- **Committee Member:** Would like to continue that discussion on star voting and ranked choice voting later on.

Balancing online & in person voting
Voting organized by geography or community?
Amanda asked for any comments or concerns on the last two slides presented. The group did not have any additional thoughts on the final two slides.

The group took a 5-minute break and reset for the next piece on evaluation.

Discuss and outline Program Evaluation
The group returned from break and Brandon Goldner, Metro, introduced himself and the agenda for the rest of the meeting. He discussed the concept of evaluation and asked the group if there was a time in anyone's life when they had to evaluate something? How did you measure it? Did it have the impact you wanted?

- **Committee Member:** Kevin shared a personal evaluation experience about returning to see his family in Philadelphia with his wife and newborn son. He had to evaluate how to do it safely, how to ensure family boundaries were maintained, how to make time for everyone they wanted to see, and how to do it in a financially smart way. Kevin noted that it was more difficult than expected, and he had to balance a lot of different factors. He and his wife had some frank conversations about managing expectations about trying to prioritize the things that are important and what boundaries they want to maintain. After working through all the factors, it helped them identify where we should be staying.
  - o **Brandon Goldner:** That's a great example. Managing expectations and prioritizing, great. Thanks for sharing.
- **Amanda Hudson:** It could be academic as well, like doing a research paper. How do I even start?
- **Committee Member:** Went to a college where I had to write a senior thesis. Set myself to write about a topic that I had a lot of knowledge about but would have to interview people in person about. Then the pandemic hit, and I had to decide whether I would risk it or switch topics. Trying to untangle the feeling that there was a need to write a great thesis. I came to see it as a graduation requirement and switched topics. Now, I want to go back at some point to complete the research.
  - o **Brandon Goldner:** Untangle those obligations, great way to put it. Whole conversation we could have about perfectionism getting in the way.

- **Committee Member:** I'm on the HOA as a secretary. I do the minutes. It's a super small HOA. We went through a process of finding a new landscaper and getting everyone's feedback on what they wanted. Everyone had different values and expectations that we had to consider. Also digging through the bylaws is definitely a handful. All about going through the process.
  - **Brandon Goldner:** Something in common with this project, sometimes things will be mandated to you that you have to consider.
- **Committee Member:** I've been developing and implementing a fellowship for community organizers; my whole process has been checking for understanding of the fellows. What is the process? How do you do it? How do you do it well? And applying that to hands-on activities so they can put it to use. Also, evaluating how they feel and how they are growing through this program. It made me think about "how do we evaluate? What are we prioritizing" is it skills, outcomes driven, or experiences?
  - **Brandon Goldner:** I am glad you brought that up. We are trying to do something, change people's lives. A lot of it is data driven, but there is a really rich impactful part of knowing how this is working.

Brandon Goldner thanked the group for sharing and engaging in a discussion about how we evaluate, how things get tangled up, and what has value in that determination. Amanda Hudson agreed that she appreciated the discussion, how it can apply to this work, and how evaluation can be very values driven.

Brandon then shared his screen to discuss the memo document regarding evaluation criteria that the committee would vote on. He asked for any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the memo.
- **Committee Member:** It worked well for me, understanding what parts were expected of us.

Amanda Hudson then shared her screen to present criteria for committee members to vote on. Each page had a link at the top of the page that allowed members to vote and see the results in real time on the shared screen. The results for each question and accompanying discussions are listed below.

What climate resilience criteria would you like to focus on in evaluation?
1. Use low-impact development practices and green infrastructure in project design and development.
2. Protect and restore floodplains, headwaters, streams and wetlands to increase their capacity to handle stormwater to protect vulnerable communities from flooding.
3. Increase tree canopy in developed areas to reduce heat island effects.
4. Protect, connect and restore habitat to support strong populations of native plants, fish and wildlife that can adapt to a changing climate.
5. Invest in segments of the regional trail system to expand active transportation opportunities for commuting, recreation and other travel.

After ranking their criteria, committee members engaged in discussion surrounding the results.
- **Brandon Goldner:** Was there any other guidance aside from "the committee will choose one or more of these criteria"?
  - **Crista Gardner:** This is in the context of the greater parks and nature bond purpose, criteria and program criteria. There are the principles, and a variety of climate resiliency pieces are within those principles, and the criteria are the racial equity criteria, which this will meet all the racial equity and community engagement criteria, and then for the climate resiliency criteria, one or more, and the program criteria, one or more. That's specifically from the legislation. We provided you with the entirety of those principles and criteria as part of one our earlier memos. We'll come back to this evaluation topic as well, when we talk about types of projects. If you're

choosing climate resilience criteria for "low-impact development practices and green infrastructure" and you think back to what we've funded before, we've funded land acquisition for nature projects, nature projects like plazas, neighborhood livability projects, and restoration projects. So, you are considering what type of projects will be funded based on the climate resilience criteria you pick for evaluation. We'll come back to this; this is not the only time we will talk about it.

- **Gabrielle Brown:** Are you keeping in your head the overall goals and values that you've established before, and ensure that you are considering those and how they are related to environment justice as you go through this.
- **Committee Member**: I'm having a tough time kind of also considering where this is this existing funding, like with flood plain restoration, it depends on what kind of project it is also, is it just about protecting the most amount of habitat, or is it also in the scope of communities too.
  - ○ **Christa Gardner**: That is something that we have considered before, in some of our Nature in Neighborhood grants, is looking at gaps in funding as well as leveraging funding. There are two pieces to that, one is leveraging funding, using the grant to allow a non-profit to be one of the first funders and go to other organizations and say, "look Metro has already committed to a certain amount of funding, will you commit as well?" We can have the ability to be the catalyst as the first funder.
- **Committee Member** Does anyone know how bad is the flooding situation here in the region? Question that just came to my mind
  - ○ **Gabrielle:** Pretty bad, generally, but more perhaps more relevant to y'all's previous discussions, floodplain risk is bourne disproportionately by poorer and BIPOC communities.
  - ○ **Amanda Hudson:** The Lents neighborhood in particular is in the flood plain.

Amanda then moved on to the next slide and invited committee members to rank the criteria in order of importance.

What program criteria would you like to focus on for evaluation?
1. Build wealth in communities of color, Indigenous communities, low-income, and other historically marginalized communities through contracting and jobs.
2. Improve human mental and physical health, particularly in communities of color, Indigenous communities, low-income communities, and other historically marginalized communities.
3. Partner with and empower Indigenous people.
4. Nurture a relationship with land and create educational opportunities (including Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math (STEAM) opportunities), and promote careers in the environmental and agricultural sector, especially for people and youth of color.
5. Consider and approach the issue of houselessness in a sensitive and humanizing way.
6. Demonstrate that people of color influence the project identification, selection, design, and implementation.
6. Ensure accessibility for people experiencing disabilities.
8. Create easy access to nature from transit and for people walking or biking.

After committee members finished ranking their criteria, members discussed their thoughts on the question and results.

- **Committee Member:** I was also thinking about "Build wealth" pretty high up, but it's broad criteria. I thought the "Demonstrate that people of color influenced the project ID" I thought their might have been more to say there.
  - o **Committee Member:** For me "Build wealth" includes resources, so for me reading "Demonstrate that people of color influence the project…" is included within that.
- **Committee Member:** I have a question for the group: I ranked "Ensure accessibility for people experiencing disabilities" higher, I think it's not considered a lot, interested in seeing how we rank that higher. Often those with disabilities get forgotten a lot.
  - o **Committee Member:** That was a tricky for me too. Thinking about where is the most systemic harm happening, if it's race, disability, etc.
  - o **Committee Member:** Thinking there are so many amazing projects where able-bodied people will go out and do it without a thought. Some things are relatively simple like using gravel instead of woodchips. Could be really easy to do without changing the nature of projects. I just think it's really low on the list.
  - o **Brandon Goldner:** All throughout, some of these criteria are not exclusive. Even if they don't appear 1st on this list, the committee could say this is part of what we want considered.
  - o **Committee Member:** This is my unpopular thought…I ranked it lower because I felt that compared to race, there's requirements for ADA but no requirements for the racial equity criteria
  - o **Crista Gardner:** I wanted to add to what Brandon was saying. If you look at the principles and criteria of the parks and nature bond, it covers a lot of what is in here, these are just specific points. We don't have to just exclusively pick one of these.

Amanda then moved on to the final slide and invited committee members to share, in an open-ended format, what else they believe should be measured.

What else should be measured?
- Partnerships created, capacity and resources built among groups. (+3)
- How many "touch points"/felt impacts to individual's daily lives?
- Interest in future civic engagement/community partnership.
- Community awareness on metro work and engagement increased.
- Community impact – is this what people want? Which people and why?
- Climate adaptability of project.

Next Steps and Closing

Allison and Crista closed the meeting with the following items:
- Committee members are invited to share their thoughts on meeting process improvements and topics they'd like to discuss using a Google Jamboard. This will be open for committee members to fill out until the next meeting.
- Special thanks were given to Amanda Hudson and PBO, and the group thanked her for all of her help throughout the meetings.
- Amanda shared future projects and issued a special thanks to Unite Oregon.
- The next meeting is scheduled for April 12.

Allison thanked everyone for their participation and then closed the meeting

Appendix A: Zoom Meeting Chat

Jeffrey Lee (he/him): I shared this layer on the jamboard: Metro's "equity focus areas":
https://regionalbarometer.oregonmetro.gov/datasets/drcMetro::all-equity-focus-areas/about
Brandon: Low priority, but I have a question RE: potential mechanism of the vote if there's a chance to ask
Jeffrey Lee (he/him): In NY's PB, "Leading up to the Assemblies and Vote Week, districts host at least 3 group outreach days (canvassing/subway) and at least 2 group phone banks."
Jeffrey Lee (he/him): (Sorry, somewhat off topic)
Jeffrey Lee (he/him): Is there a way to allocate funding to level out the playing field for smaller community orgs?
Crista (She/Her): Theresa, See notes here: https://www.oregonmetro.gov/events/nature-neighborhoods-capital-grants-pilot-committee-meeting/2022-03-15
Kevin: Back!
Jeffrey Lee (he/him): kalbi smoothie sounds great!
Amanda Hudson (she/her) | Participatory Budgeting Oregon: I will jump off camera to spare you my chewing
Amanda Hudson (she/her) | Participatory Budgeting Oregon: Oh dang, Kevin. I can soooo relate to your struggle.
Amanda Hudson (she/her) | Participatory Budgeting Oregon: A good thesis is a done thesis
Jeffrey Lee (he/him): 1000%!
Jeffrey Lee (he/him): Re. wedding planning (we navigated this '20-'21), it's definitely helpful to remember that it's not your parent's or family's wedding haha
Amanda Hudson (she/her) | Participatory Budgeting Oregon: The pressure is real
Jeffrey Lee (he/him): Thanks! =)
Jeffrey Lee (he/him): And how "objectivity" is a construct!
Amanda Hudson (she/her) | Participatory Budgeting Oregon: the Microsoft agenda
Amanda Hudson (she/her) | Participatory Budgeting Oregon: Thanks for the ad hoc tech support, Alisa
Amanda Hudson (she/her) | Participatory Budgeting Oregon: the Lents neighborhood in particular is in the flood plain
Jeffrey Lee (he/him): Sorry, have to move to the office!
Jeffrey Lee (he/him): 2009 Johnson Creek flood:
http://media.oregonlive.com/gresham_impact/photo/12044655-large.jpg
Crista (She/Her): Way to stay connected to PBO!

Sign up for the PBO newsletter: https://www.pboregon.org/
Youth Voice, Youth Vote (YV² PB), an upcoming participatory budgeting project that centers East County Youth. Youth Voice, Youth Vote is a project to allocate American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for COVID-19 relief and recovery in East Metro Legislative Districts through a youth-based participatory budgeting process. Read more: https://www.pboregon.org/youthvoice-youthvote
Complete the YV² PB Interest Form: https://forms.gle/TvzpK8cXjii3GnaF7
We would love to connect with anyone that may be interested in learning more about and/or participating in the YV² PB project. Please share this interest form with youth who may be interested in participating in the East Metro Legislative Districts.
Amanda Hudson (she/her) | Participatory Budgeting Oregon: Also, thanks to Unite Oregon in helping with recruitment

Jeffrey Lee (he/him): Thank you so much for creating this space and inspiring! I'm definitely going to borrow some of your tools and resources! =D

Allison: As always, here's the Jamboard link for post-meeting feedback: https://jamboard.google.com/d/1KhtwJkV6Gih0gJNoFg3bfmEnYdJ9Izv7P50LDfbM-OQ/edit?usp=sharing

Brandon: Amanda, I'll say it later too, but thank you for your empathic challenging of my own thinking. You've helped me a LOT. I appreciate you and we're better for your work and energy

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.