



Metro

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Meeting summary

Date: Thu. March 16, 2022
To: Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants Pilot – Program Design and Review Committee
From: Capital Grants Pilot team
Subject: Evaluation of Participatory Budgeting Process

Memo Purpose

This memo provides background and things to think about for the Program Design and Review Committee (Committee), in the context of **EVALUATING** the Participatory Budgeting process of the Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants Pilot (Pilot).

At the March 29, 2022 Committee meeting (7th meeting), the Committee will share their experiences with evaluation; hear a little about the evaluation processes in this memo; and choose the questions to ask, qualities, characteristics, and specific metrics they would like to see in an evaluation process.

Background and Context

The committee will help decide how the Participatory Budgeting pilot will be evaluated.

This evaluation will be public, and it will be used by lots of different folks: members of the public, Metro staff and elected officials, and by other jurisdictions looking to run their own Participatory Budgeting processes.

While we don't know exactly what form this evaluation will take, what we DO know is that some of those evaluation criteria will come directly from the Committee at the March 29 meeting. Some of them come from a list the Committee will choose from; some will come from a result of brainstorming.

There is a separate evaluation process for the Parks and Nature Bond (Bond) that this pilot is funded by. Ideally, the Committee will BOTH shape the evaluation of the Participatory Budgeting portion of the pilot, AND consider how that evaluation aligns with the larger Bond evaluation criteria.

There are also some legal requirements that will inform how the Participatory Budgeting process will be evaluated.

With all this in mind, this memo has background about the evaluation criteria for the Parks and Nature Bond, as well as examples of other evaluations processes.

Evaluation Criteria: Bond, Pilot, and Projects

This is for the committee to consider. These do not have to be a part of the evaluation criteria.

The Bond outlined Purposes, Principles, Criteria, and Requirements to which the Pilot must legally adhere. Understanding these are useful for thinking about how the Participatory Budgeting process should be evaluated, but they do not have to be a part of the evaluation criteria.

Provided below is a condensed summary. If you want more information about any portion of these sections, or for the full text of the Bond, please contact Crista Gardner (Crista.Gardner@oregonmetro.gov) or Gabrielle Brown (Gabrielle.Brown@oregonmetro.gov).

GUIDING PURPOSES: PILOT

- The Bond will allow the region to continue efforts protecting water quality and wildlife habitat for generations to come. This program will fund community-led projects, with an emphasis on benefitting historically marginalized communities.
- These projects will protect and improve water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, support climate resiliency and/or increase people's experience of nature at the community scale.
- All projects must satisfy required bond program community engagement, racial equity and climate resilience criteria.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA: PILOT

All of the following **must guide** the Pilot; not just one or two. While this does not mean the evaluation criteria must account for all of these, it's critical and necessary to keep these in mind, both while the program is being designed and while it's evaluated.

- Serve communities through inclusive engagement, transparency and accountability
- Advance racial equity through bond investments
- Protect clean water for people, fish and wildlife
- Protect and restore culturally significant native plant communities
- Protect, connect and improve habitat for native fish and wildlife
- Take care of what we have (maintain, update and reinvest in regional and local destinations)
- Make parks and natural areas more accessible and inclusive
- Connect more people to the land and rivers of our region
- Invest in trails for biking and walking
- Support community-led parks and nature projects
- Make communities more resilient to climate change
- Meaningfully engage with communities of color, Indigenous communities, people with low incomes, and other historically marginalized communities in planning, development and selection of projects
- Prioritize projects and needs identified by communities of color, Indigenous communities, low-income and other historically marginalized groups

- Demonstrate accountability for tracking outcomes and reporting impacts, particularly as they relate to communities of color, Indigenous communities, people with low incomes, and other historically marginalized communities
- Improve the accessibility and inclusiveness of developed parks
- Include strategies to prevent or mitigate displacement and/or gentrification resulting from bond investments
- Set aspirational goals for workforce diversity and use of COBID contractors and work to reduce barriers to achieving these goals; demonstrate accountability by tracking outcomes and reporting impacts

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS: PROJECTS FUNDED BY PILOT

The following are minimum requirements of the projects that get funded by the pilot. Same as above; while this does not mean the evaluation criteria must account for all of these, it's critical and necessary to keep these in mind, both while the program is being designed and while it's evaluated.

- Projects must demonstrate strong partnerships between community-based organizations and public (non-federal) agencies
- Projects must be within the Urban Growth Boundary and/or the Metro jurisdictional boundary, or as approved by the Metro Council
- Projects must be clearly achievable given the knowledge, skills, and resources available among project partners
- Expenses must be associated with capital projects only; not for general operating expenses
- Projects that involve the acquisition of properties or easements must be negotiated with willing sellers
- Grantees will be required to evaluate their projects (i.e. progress reports)

Evaluation Criteria: Pilot

*These **MUST** be chosen by the Committee. We will ask you to rank these at the March 29 meeting.*

MINIMUM REQUIREMENT: CLIMATE RESILIENCE CRITERIA

The Committee must identify **at least one** climate resilience criterion that the Pilot will satisfy from among the following to include in the guidebook. The Committee will choose one or more of these at the March 29 meeting.

- Protect, connect and restore habitat to support strong populations of native plants, fish and wildlife that can adapt to a changing climate
- Protect and restore floodplains, headwaters, streams and wetlands to increase their capacity to handle stormwater to protect vulnerable communities from flooding
- Increase tree canopy in developed areas to reduce heat island effects
- Use low-impact development practices and green infrastructure in project design and development

- Invest in segments of the regional trail system to expand active transportation opportunities for commuting, recreation and other travel

MINIMUM REQUIREMENT: PROGRAM CRITERIA

The Committee must identify **at least one** program criterion that the Pilot will satisfy from among the following to include in the guidebook. The Committee will choose one or more of these at the March 29 meeting.

- Improve human mental and physical health, particularly in communities of color, Indigenous communities, low-income communities, and other historically marginalized communities
- Build wealth in communities of color, Indigenous communities, low-income, and other historically marginalized communities through contracting and jobs
- Demonstrate that people of color influenced the project identification, selection, design, and implementation
- 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
- Partner with and empower Indigenous people
- Ensure accessibility for people experiencing disabilities
- Create easy access to nature from transit and for people walking or biking
- Consider and approach the issue of houselessness in a sensitive and humanizing way

Evaluation Examples

This is for the committee to consider. These do not have to be a part of the evaluation criteria.

The following are some of the qualities, characteristics, and specific metrics used to evaluate other programs. There are of course many ways programs can be evaluated, and this is not an exhaustive list. However, the examples below shared by Participatory Budgeting Oregon staff and Metro staff give a brief overview of the ways capital grants and/or Participatory Budgeting projects have been evaluated in the past.

These will be discussed in more detail at our March 29, 2022 Committee meeting. If you want more information about these, or to ask for more examples, please contact Amanda Hudson with Participatory Budgeting Oregon (ahudson@pboregon.org) or Crista Gardner with Metro (Crista.Gardner@oregonmetro.gov).

EVALUATION EXAMPLE: GREENSBORO PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

Public Agenda and the Participatory Budgeting Project created a toolkit for evaluators and implementers of Participatory Budgeting. A link to the toolkit [can be found by clicking here](#).

What follows are a few intended impacts, and suggestions on how to measure them.

Intended Impact: Engage residents who don't participate in the mainstream political process.

- How it can be measured:
 - Number and percentage of Participatory Budgeting voters who are eligible to vote but did not vote in the most recent local election.

Intended Impact: engage people who are excluded from standard forms of political participation due to age, immigration status, or other reasons.

- How it can be measured:
 - Number and percentage of PB voters who are ineligible to vote in local elections

Intended Impact: Increase access during the idea collection phase, the project development phase and the voting phase

- How it can be measured:
 - Accessibility indicators for idea collection phase, project development phase and voting
 - Idea Collection Participant and Voter Surveys, i.e. "How did you first hear about today's event? Check all that apply..."

EVALUATION EXAMPLE: GREENSBORO PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING

The City of Greensboro, North Carolina led a Participatory Budgeting process in 2015-2016. A link to their full research and Evaluation Report [can be found by clicking here](#).

What follows are three intended impacts, and the data used to measure them.

Intended Impact: Successfully include people of color and low-income residents in the process

- How it was measured:
 - Demographic data suggested that participants reflected the city's population in ethnicity, income and gender.

Intended Impact: Increase participation in government budget processes

- How it was measured:
 - 85% of PB participants were new to the city's budgeting process.
 - 2,000 people were involved in the Participatory Budgeting process, while involvement in information-only budget meetings in the previous five years only involved 298 people.

Intended Impact: Motivate residents to want to do more in their city

- How it was measured:
 - Budget delegates overwhelmingly reported that after participating in PB they would be more likely to attend other community meetings.
 - Many, if not most, also indicated wanting to be involved in the next PB cycle to take on greater responsibilities.

EVALUATION EXAMPLE: DIALOGUES IN ACTION

Dialogues in Action led a series of discussions and workshops with Metro staff about possible impacts and metrics for the bond.

Their approach involved defining intended impacts, then asking participants to offer suggestions around four questions:

- What are we doing?
- How are we doing it?
- What changes for people if it's done?
- How people are impacted if it's done?

With the impacts defined and the answers from these four questions, the group developed possible metrics for each intended impact. What follows are a sample of two intended impacts, and some of the possible metrics used to measure each impact:

Intended Impact: Community members exercise voice, agency, and involvement in public decision-making for natural areas.

- Possible Key Metrics:
 - The final process and product reflects input from community members
 - Plan to participate more in the future
 - Broad sense of community ownership over outcomes
 - Perception about institutional trust
 - Community partners develop skills and best practices to introduce participatory budgeting processes in other projects to engage with the community

Intended Impact: Community members in park-deficient neighborhoods experience increased access to nearby natural areas.

- Possible Key Metrics:
 - Reduced distance of parks to homes
 - Similar quality/asset value between places frequented by BIPOC v. white residents
 - Individuals with disabilities are able to access parks
 - Comparable use between members of Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color and white residents
 - Number of spaces/assets that are specifically created to meet the needs of historically marginalized communities

EVALUATION EXAMPLE: 2015 CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAM EVALUATION

A 2006 voter-approved natural areas bond measure established the \$15 million Nature in Neighborhoods Capital Grants Program, and it was evaluated in 2015.

What follows are a sample of three intended impacts, and some of the ways each impact was measured:

Intended impact: The capital grants program complements and supports the work of local agencies and communities in bringing nature in to the developed areas of the Metro region

- What was measured:
 - Local planning efforts were supported on multiple levels from funding shovel-ready projects managed by agencies to initiating efforts to implement community-driven projects responding to local plans.
 - Grantees reported that Metro’s capital grant program is fulfilling an important funding niche in urban conservation.
 - Grantees reported that Metro’s willingness to be “first to the table” to commit financial resources added credibility and encouraged the participation of other funders.

Intended impact: The program emphasized public-private partnerships on projects

- What was measured:
 - Community-driven projects were successful at creating meaningful partnerships that influenced how the project was designed and used.
 - Grantees from community-based organizations are geographically focused and projects are important to local residents.
 - Agency-driven projects engaged non-profit organizations that work at a regional level such as SOLVE or Friends of Trees, particularly when there was no pre-existing relationship with a local group.

Intended Impact: The outcomes are worthwhile for nature

- What was measured
 - All of the projects helped boost the region’s biodiversity – a cornerstone objective of the Regional Conservation Strategy.
 - Restoration projects increased habitat quality and passage for the region’s endangered fish, affecting local ecology as well as the health of the watershed as a whole.
 - Additional water quality benefits were achieved through the use of low-impact development approaches such as porous pavement, rain gardens, bioswales, and other stormwater facilities.

Conclusion

There are lots of ways to evaluate a program. Your role as a Committee member is critical in making sure this Participatory Budgeting process does what it’s intended to do, as defined by the requirements of the Bond, as guided by Participatory Budgeting best practices, and as decided by you.

While the March 29, 2022 meeting won’t be the only opportunity to discuss what and how to evaluate this program, it’s an important first step. We hope this brief background will help spur some innovative thinking and support (or challenge) your own judgment and experience on how government programs ought to be held accountable.

Reflections from our 4/12 meeting: How did it go?

What worked?

What should be changed?

What questions do you still have? What is unresolved?

3/29/22 Meeting

EMSWCD Partners in Conservation (PIC) Grants Program Evaluation Report (equity-focused):
<https://emswcd.org/equity-focused-pic-program-eval/#more-40772>

"Communities of Color in Multnomah County: An Unsettling Profile Research Series":
<https://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/multco-unsettling-profiles>

For target pop, could use Metro's "equity focus areas" or similar layers (GIS support?):
<https://regionalbarometer.oregonmetro.gov/datasets/drcMetro::all-equity-focus-areas/about>

Metro's "Planning parks and nature with communities of color":
<https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/2019/10/08/Connect-with-Nature-Report.pdf>

https://www.apano.org/apply-for-our-climate-health-and-housing-institute/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=apply-for-our-climate-health-and-housing-institute

**Apply for APANO's Climate, Health, and Housing Institute (\$961.50 stipend).
Deadline 4/15**

What resources would you like to have? What resources or references would you like to share with each other?

What additional questions do you have about Bond Funding and Project Development?

PARKING LOT!

addressed is that Metro can't use Project Development dollars (to fund Metro business?) because bond language and the Oregon Constitution do not permit it. So a question for the Committee is how do we creatively fund

Is the committee responsible for addressing funding for Project Development or is that Metro's responsibility?

How/when will outreach to potential project implementors look like? What intentional actions will be made to reach smaller/grassroots groups to reach new communities?

JL: Could "S.T.A.R." (Score -Then-Automatic-Run off) voting be added to methods list? ~Provides more voice in local democracy: <https://www.starvoting.us/>

JL: Just acknowledging technical hurdles to interpreting legal constraints --> it's important we continue using this space to share concerns/ideas ...

(cont'd) ... regarding equity in project development phase --> will lead to solutions as we become more familiar with what's possible/not in this framework!

What is working well about our meetings to facilitate your participation and engagement?

JL: Establishing the group agreements was important! I like reminding myself about them occasionally to ensure I'm participating ~equally and keeping focused!

JL: As we approach decision-making pts, it might be useful if we could jump into smaller groups then bring in for larger discussions. But could be logistically challenging...

KH: I agree with JL. I feel myself being influenced by other people's ideas and discussing in smaller groups helps me flesh things out a little bit more.

JL: Maybe offer a spreadsheet (w/ editing privileges) or forum-type platform where we can share useful readings/resources or even discuss OUTSIDE of meetings.

JL: Consider making Metro Presentation Slides PDF required reading. It's already available on ShareFile but this reminder could help set a mindset and let our thoughts ruminate...

JL: Rather than 8-10 background readings for 1 meeting, I prefer assigned specific reading sections, relevant to each meeting topic. A bit overwhelming to skim that Jan 18th chunk...

What needs to change about our meetings so that you can participate/ engage differently?

TH: I'd like to experiment a different structure for one of the meetings. I feel like when the meetings are filled with long presentations, it hinders the ability to engage in robust conversations.

I also feel some of the ways questions (or points of inputs at the end of presentations) are asked are also difficult to provide feedbacks or questions

formats are largely a committee vs. Metro staff interaction, but I'd like to see the discussions facilitation more in a "committee members discussion together" interaction to allow

I really like this idea. Would love to have more time for meaningful conversations and ensure every committee member understands everything

Yes. agree with this.

Suggested language for "targeted populations"

"Neighborhoods that have been historically redlined, underinvested, and/or gentrified..."

"at risk for gentrification"

"at risk for further gentrification"

"projects led by residents who hold marginalized identities"

I like this a little better: "projects led by people who identify as holding marginalized identities."

JL: Metro Park & Nature's 24 "Target Areas"

JL: "communities of most need" (e.g., have NOT benefited from capital investments in recent years) by Philadelphia PB

JL: "targeted nature-deficient areas, affordable housing, and/or low-income communities" used in past Metro projects

What information do you want (or need) to...

Finish establishing this group?

Add your sticky notes here (use the toolbar on the left of the screen to add in notes!)

I would like to use some of our time to do a deep dive into a couple case studies from PB processes done in other places. I'd like more context to see how it has worked before.

JL: Do we want to form demographic subcommittees or specific issues committees? It may be good to have this as an option if that need arises...

Memos are a lot to consume. Maybe in addition to the memos, a quick video or voice message (could be posted on Youtube or something) can be used to summarize the Memo.

Execute the program design process?

JL: Specific definitions/glossary (e.g., equity vs. equality) + infographic to serve as "reminders"

More "zoom outs" to see where each meeting is fitting into the overall process. I find myself feeling disoriented.

JL: Accountability steps for ensuring community needs come first (vs. our own biases). Is there community input in each step?

A full timeline that correlates to the phases of the project/pb and more details on potential deadlines

JL: Discuss monitoring and evaluation methods. It's useful to have an understanding how we'll measure performance as we are structuring the product.

What topics are important for us to explore together? What do you want to learn more about?

KH: How jurisdictions navigate Bond restrictions.

JL: Civic technology! Getting community input about preferred information platforms. And does Metro staff have capacity to build multilingual web surveys/apps to crowdsource?

consequences of stepping out of legal parameters

Are there any adjustments we should make to our group agreements?

Add sticky notes here!

can we add a 5-15 minute break in the middle of each meeting?

The memos aren't very easy to understand and are lengthy. Providing questions/pointers on the purpose of us reading would be helpful or what to look for would help.

JL: I agree with comment about memos. Consider reducing duplicated info from past memos. They should steer meeting's focus and stimulate discussion!

Not have agendas that are too packed. Leaving ample time for group conversations on difficult topics that can be hard to understand.

Leaving some flexibility for a more natural flow of conversations

These are screenshots of comments made on a previous version of the Mural board, preserved here for record.

Q, Summit: Can ideas be submitted at the Summit (or must they be vetted beforehand)?

Y	Discussion, clarifications, questions	Vetted beforehand is good to allow for higher level project ideas development. We will also allow direct methods such as open house discussions and soundings. However, we have considered opening for submission of projects after the New Year of the Summit?	N
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is this our final decision?		<input type="checkbox"/>

Large Projects

Q: How should survey results be scored or summarized (match community & program criteria)?

Discussion, clarifications, questions

Would scoring introduce further/premature biases? I like the idea of summarizing results; consider using digital visualization to contextualize potential community and geographical impacts.

Q: Can individuals or organizations submit large project ideas?

Y	Discussion, clarifications, questions	Yes, to align with goals outlined in Guidelines, 18. (Participatory processes) would need to be developed which would need to be developed moving from more of a top-down approach to one that allows individuals to participate by allowing them to participate they can manage a grant and to build their own vision.	N
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is this our final decision?		<input type="checkbox"/>

Q: Must CIP projects be sponsored by a community-based org?

Y	Discussion, clarifications, questions	Need a definition for how "sponsored" is defined here. I support the requirement for demonstrating partnership with CBO and public agency. CBOs' community based organizations need to be defined and engaged in a broad array of activities that support civic and community engagement. What does CBOs' support look like in terms of they address health & life issues for everyone? (see Metro CIP link)	N
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is this our final decision?		<input type="checkbox"/>

<https://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/metro-events/Community%20capacity%20building%20budget%20note%20response%202.18.2020.pdf>

Voting

Select a sticky



Engagement & Participation

How can we ensure that all participants have an equal voice in the process?

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Community Vote Structure

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PROCESS GOALS

- Establish a clear and shared vision for the future.
- Identify key areas for improvement and set priorities.
- Engage all stakeholders in the process.
- Develop a clear and actionable plan.
- Monitor progress and adjust as needed.

TARGETED POPULATIONS

- All members of the organization.
- Key stakeholders and partners.
- Employees at all levels.
- Customers and clients.
- Community members.

Do you have any other questions? What additional information do you need?

Eligibility & Credentialing

What should be the criteria for who is eligible to participate? (e.g., residency, citizenship, etc.)

- Residency: Must be a resident of the community.
- Citizenship: Must be a citizen of the country.
- Age: Must be 18 years of age or older.
- Language: Must be able to speak the language of the process.
- Education: Must have a high school diploma or equivalent.

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